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SCIENTIFIC HISTORY OF THE HINDI LANGUAGE

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Shamsher Singh Narula

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Hindi Language

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PREFACE

A language is the product of the whole course of the history of a society and is the cumulative creation of an entire people through the efforts of several generations. The origin and growth of the Hindi language can, therefore, be properly understood only if studied in inseparable connection with the development of society in Northern India and to the languages, living and dead, created by its people. Historians of Hindi, by limiting their studies to the language, have so far achieved only an incomplete understanding of the nature of Modern Hindi, the position it has come to acquire and the contribution it can make to the growth of Indian culture and nationhood. Further, most historians of Hindi have followed Grierson's theory regarding the origin and development of Northern Indian languages propounded in his *Linguistic Survey of India*, half a century ago. A lot of new information, which has come to light since he wrote, does not, however, sustain his formulations.

This *Scientific History of the Hindi Language* seeks to study the origin and growth of Modern Hindi in relation to the languages people in Northern India actually speak and the material and spiritual wealth they have created since ancient times. It follows the scientific laws regarding the growth of languages, universally held valid and fully draws upon the knowledge regarding the earlier Indian languages, particularly the Apabhraṁśas, which is now available. The purpose of this historical study of Hindi, however, is not to put forward any theory. Its aim is to stimulate a scientific discussion on the subject and to emphasize the need for a new method in studying the origin and development of Indian languages.

The great variety of our cultural heritage is evidence of its catholicity and of the freedom of discussion it has generally preserved. This characteristic of our culture, however, can

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become a creative force only if it is realised that truth itself is best served by doubting it sometimes. This scepticism is all the more needed in studying the Hindi language—a field in which obscurantism still holds sway, because a scientific understanding of the nature of the Modern Hindi language and of the language and nationality problem in Northern India is vital to our future as a free people and is intimately linked with the carrying forward of our cultural heritage.

September 14, 1955. S. S. N.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTORY

One of the beliefs we have inherited from the British rule is that the people living in the length and breadth of Northern India possess a single colloquial speech. Before Independence, this language was variously called Hindi, Urdu or Hindustani. While there were sharp differences of opinion as to whether it should be reorientated more in the direction of Sanskrit or draw more upon Persian and Arabic vocabularies, everyone seemed to agree that it was the mother-tongue of the entire mass of people living in what was then described as the Hindustani area. This was evidenced by the symposium on "National Language for India" edited by Dr. Z.A. Ahmad and published in the late thirties[1]. Its contributors were some of the most eminent men from the political, social and literary life of the country. Yet not one of them seemed to doubt that Hindi, Hindustani or Urdu was the mother-tongue of the North Indian people. Indeed, on this basis, they supported its claim as an all-India language, pleading that it should replace English as the national language of the country.

The British rulers had sedulously cultivated the belief regarding a single colloquial language for the whole of Northern India. In one Census Report after another, it was described as Eastern Hindi and Western Hindi. In one of these reports, a Civil Service bureaucrat, Mr. Edye, was quoted to show that the so-called dialects of Hindi, spoken in areas as large as France and England, had no future and were sure to be superseded in the course of time. In this connection Mr. Edye observed :

> "Enough to say that for the unscientific like myself, these vernaculars are not different languages, but different dialects of the same language. I have served in three of the four vernacular areas and to me differences between speaking to a villager of Gorakhpur and to a jungleman in Jhansi is precisely the difference between speaking to a peasant of Devon and to a crofter of Aberdeen. If you are intelligible to one you can with patience make yourself intelligible to the other."[2]

Needless to say that any two human beings can "with patience" make themselves intelligible to each other and the

1. Published by Kitabistan, Allahabad.
2. Census Report for 1921—Part I, Volume I.

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patience needed in the case of people from linguistically neighbouring regions can hardly be taxing. A similar claim was advanced for Hindi or Hindustani for the rest of India also without regarding it as the single colloquial speech for the whole of India. Referring to Hindustani, Dr. S.K. Chatterji stated :

> " Thanks to it, Indians over the whole of Northern India and a good part of the Deccan do not feel the barriers of speech at least in elementary conversation *e.g.* in travelling from the Burma border to the Afghan frontier and from Kashmir and Nepal to Mysore, a knowledge of it acquired without effort is enough and this Hindi (Hindustani) is understood in the pilgrimage centres of the South as well."[1]

Hindustani which really meant the dialect of the areas near-about Delhi—*Khaṛi Boli* as against the *Paṛi Bolis* of the neighbouring areas[2]—was given a very general and all-embracing meaning.[3] Not only was it thought to cover Modern Hindi and Urdu but it was claimed that it had its beginnings about a thousand years ago from similarly colloquial Prākrit and Apabhraṁśa languages. A long and continuous history as a language colloquial in the whole of North India was claimed for it. It was put forward as the natural *lingua franca* "of 257 millions" and the inevitable *lingua Indica.*

Subsequently, with the growth of the national and democratic movements the cause of the 'dialects' of Hindi or *Pradeshic Bhashas,* as these are more often called, began to be espoused and their claim as the real colloquial speeches of the people began to be actively advocated. Some of the finest minds then in the Hindi literary world joined together in the *Janpad Andolan*—a movement for the promotion of the regional languages of the Hindi area. Grierson's *Linguistic Survey of India* which had in the beginning of the century referred to the existence of several independent, though related, colloquial speeches in Northern India became the Bible of the movement.

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1. S.K. Chatterji : Language and the Linguistic Problem.
2. The name *Khari Boli* is due to the fact that this language uses 'a' as against 'o' of *Braj Bhasha* etc.
3. S. K. Chatterji states in 'Indo-Aryan and Hindi' : "Although the home language of a relatively small number—the native districts of Hindi or Hindustani embrace only South Eastern Punjab, Western U. P., North Eastern Central Provinces, North Gwalior and a portion of Eastern Rajputana (and even here we have a good portion covered by dialects, Hindustani being mostly confined to the cities)—Hindustani in its two styles—High Hindi and Urdu is the recognised language of practically the whole of Aryan India, excluding Bengal, Assam and Orissa, Nepal, Sindh, Gujarat and the Maratha country."

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Not content with the large number of languages mentioned by Grierson, this school of thought unfortunately went to the other extreme. Tribal communities—*Janpads*—existing over two millenniums ago, were scanned to find out the linguistic geography of the present times. While rightly tracing the origin of modern North Indian languages to the clans and tribes referred to in the *Mahabharata,* Pāṇini's *Aṣtadhyayi* and the works of Kalidasa, it was forgotten that two thousand years of history and material and spiritual advancement lie between the present and those times. All the linguistic peculiarities and dialectal variations which had inevitably survived in this country because of the absence of any basic change-over from feudalism to capitalism, were heightened and these areas were rechristened under their ancient names. Mahapandit Rahul Sankrityayana prepared a list of over a score of them ready with the names of their capital towns. Further, he desired these small units to be separate republics—Meerut to be capital of *Kuru Janpad* with *Kauravi* as its language, Bareilly to be capital of Ruhelkhand with *Punchali* as its language and so on.[1] Such a movement, though initially very progressive, came very handy to feudal interests and they very soon became its patrons.

Between the two extremes referred to above, the main problem of the origin and nature of the Hindi language and its relationship to the present colloquial speeches has tended to be obscured with the result that a clear understanding of the nationalities and language problem in Northern India has become difficult. As we shall see later, it is untenable that over a score of dialects dovetailing into and overlapping one another over the length and breadth of Northern India have stood stationary and changeless throughout their history, resisting all the integrative forces that came from within and without. The question is whether the integrative and centripetal tendencies which have been ceaselessly at work for over a millennium, have tended to mould them into a single colloquial language for the entire territory called the Hindi region or into more or less half a dozen languages generally referred to as the *Pradeshic Bhashas*[2]—the 'regional languages.' None has ever denied the existence of these 'regional languages' though differences of opinion exist in regard to their exact nature and relationship to Modern Hindi.

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1. *Cf. Madhukar—Janpad Andolan Ank*—April—August 1944. A detailed study of the subject is available in Shivdan Singh Chauhan's '*Pragtiwad*' published by *Pradip Karyalaya,* Moradabad.

2. *Hindi Ki Pradeshic Bhashaen* published by Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, refers to five such languages—Rajasthani, Braj Bhasha, Bhojpuri, Avadhi and Maithili. The map included in the book also refers to Magadhi of South Bihar.

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An examination of the nature of and the relationship between these modern languages, requires a study of the linguistic evolution in India and a discussion of the rise and fall of the various languages, the records of which are available today. Furthermore, this has been found necessary because it is claimed that Hindi and over a dozen other Aryan languages of modern India have resulted not from the synthesis of scores of clan and tribal languages of earlier times but from the splitting up of one or two languages of ancient or medieval India, languages which embraced vast areas and which were colloquial speeches over a territory even larger than the present Hindi region. As the claim of Modern Hindi to recognition as the colloquial speech of the entire mass of people living in Northern India is based upon the supposed colloquial character of those earlier languages, it becomes difficult to arrive at a correct understanding of Modern Hindi without examining the origin and nature of Sanskrit, Prākrits and Apabhraṁśas.

An examination of the past and present of the Modern Hindi language leads inevitably to a study of its role in the future. A valuable heritage of the Indian people, as Hindi undoubtedly is, the question of carrying it forward and making it an effective instrument for the reflowering of Indian culture becomes paramount in any survey of the Hindi language.

A scientific study of the Hindi language has, therefore, to examine all these problems which arise from its past and present and which are vital to its future.

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CHAPTER TWO

THE ORIGIN AND NATURE OF THE SANSKRIT LANGUAGE

The ancestry of Modern Hindi is traced not only to the Saurasenī Apabhraṁśa and the earlier Prākrit of the first millennium A. D. but also to Sanskrit, the supposed colloquial speech of the whole of Northern India before the Christian era. Many histories of the Hindi language even begin with a study of the 'Indo-European,' the so-called common speech of the earliest Āryan tribes and with that of the original home wherefrom they are supposed to have brought that speech into India in the second millennium B.C. Evidence of the most ancient basic words of various groups of languages in Europe and Asia and similarity of early myths are taken to support the theory of a common homeland and a common language.

Max Muller who first gave currency to the word Āryan in this philological and racial context later strongly decried the use of this term to connote a common race.[1] This has, however, persisted because it is difficult to maintain the concept of a common Indo-European language without that of a common race. It has been pointed out that the word Ārya which means one who ploughs and tills[2] has no racial connotation,[3] that it merely indicates a change-over from nomadic and pastoral to agricultural life and that the Vedic literature makes no reference to Āryans

1. Max Muller : "There is no Aryan race in blood ; Aryan in scientific language is utterly inapplicable to race. It means language and nothing but language ; and if we speak of Aryan race at all, we should know that it means no more than Aryan speech."

2. Max Muller : "I can only state that the etymological significance of Arya seems to be : One who ploughs or tills The Aryans would seem to have chosen this name for themselves as opposed to the nomadic races."

3. Nanimadhab Chaudhri : "In view of the results of our investigation into the ethnic composition of the Indus people, there is no justification for characterising the Indus religion as non-Aryan or pre-Aryan (The Indus Religion and Indus People—Calcutta Review, May to September 1952); "If the views given above are even partially accepted it will be found that there is no real gulf such as has been suggested, between the Indus period and the Rig Vedic period. There is an unbroken continuity in race as well as in culture." (The Rigvedic People - Calcutta Review, September 1953 to February 1954).

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having a home outside India.[1] It has also been observed on the basis of a study of the basic roots of Tamil words that the Dravidians and the Āryans had a common origin.[2] At the same time, it is held that speech is so necessary to man and innate in a given society that if the present languages were to be forgotten, new languages very much similar to the previous ones would soon make their appearance.[3]

Philological discoveries of the last few decades go some way in resolving the above paradoxes. J. B. S. Haldane holds that much of the ritual practised by early societies is pre-lingual in origin, human speech itself having originated only in the last eighty to thirty thousand years,[4] long after man had become a tool-making animal, organised into societies. The theory regarding the gestural origin of language which has drawn attention to elements of similarity in various unrelated languages,[5] is likely to provide some explanation, other than racial, of similarities between related languages included in the Āryan group. It is possible that early Āryans, living necessarily as nomad tribes, did not have any permanent habitat and that in the course of their wanderings from one sub-continent to another, these tribes and clans kept separating and dispersing even during the early period of language formation, when the common mythology could also have begun to take shape.

It is not possible to discuss the above questions here. These are pertinent only to the extent they go to show that the Āryan tribes which kept coming into India for almost a millennium

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1. B R. Ambedkar : "There occur two words in *Rig Veda*. One is Arya with a short 'a' अर्य and the other is Ārya with a long 'a' आर्य. Arya with short 'a' is used at 88 places meaning (1) enemy (2) respectable person (3) name for India (4) owner Vaishya or citizen. Arya with long '*a*' is used at 31 places. But in none of these the word is used in the racial sense. (Who are the Shudras).

   P. T. Srinivasan points out that the word Arya occurs 33 times in the Mantras which in all contain 153,972 words and remarks : "This rare occurrence is itself a proof that the tribes that called themselves Aryas were not invaders that conquered the country and exterminated the people. For an invading tribe would boast of its achievements constantly (Life in Ancient India in the Age of the Mantras).

2. Nellur Swami S. Gnana Prakasar : Linguistic Evidence for the Common Origin of the Dravidians and Indo-Europeans—Tamil Culture, Quarterly, Madras—January 1953.

3. R. A. Wilson : The Birth of Language.

4. The Origin of Language—Rationalist Annual, London 1952.

5. Prof. A. Johannesson : The Origin of Language Also author's article in 'Nature', London, of July 9, 1950 entitled : "The Gestural Origin of Language : Evidence from Six Unrelated Languages."

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could not be speaking one common language as is generally supposed.[1]

A study of our languages in relation to early Sanskrit would have been useful if done scientifically, because the rudiments of modern languages existed in hoary antiquity. Founded on its distinct basic stock of words and grammatical system, a language kept improving and perfecting itself from epoch to epoch, side by side with the enrichment of the productive equipment of the society. It transformed itself imperceptibly by the slow and prolonged accumulation of new elements and the equally gradual dying away of old ones. Even the battles between languages, unlike the battles between the different people speaking them, took the form of a prolonged process of crossing, extending over several centuries, the victorious language maintaining its grammatical system and basic stock of words, but, all the same, undergoing a change through the absorption of the vigorous elements of the defeated one.

Linguistic evolution is directly dependent upon historical circumstances. A proper study of our living languages, with the help of the dead ones, would enable us to understand the processes of our history, whereby the colloquial speeches of scores of clans and tribes spread over Northern India coalesced into the present less than a dozen languages. The origin of modern Indian languages is, on the contrary, traced to one or two varieties of early Sanskrit which in the course of time are supposed to have split into three or four Prākrits. One of them, the Sauraseni Prākrit is believed to embrace an area now comprising Western Uttar Pradesh, East Punjab, Rajasthan, Madhya Bharat and Gujarat. Modern Hindi is held to have arisen along with other languages of these regions, from the splitting up of this Prākrit through its later Apabhraṁśa form. No reason is ever given for the linguistic evolution in India thus following a course altogether different from the one universally held good.

It is now the accepted tenet of philology that languages, as we understand them today, covering vast areas and spoken by people formerly belonging to scores of clans and tribes, did not exist during the early period of human history, when the material equipment of society was extremely poor. Further, the development of languages has taken place, not through the splitting up

1. How much variation can there be in these tribal languages is indicated by the fact that the three related tribes which landed in the Isle of Thanet (Britain)—Jutes, Hengist and Horsa—in the same year, 449 A. D., and from almost the same place spoke three different languages, so much so they were described by Venerable Bede in "The Ecclesiastical History of the English Race" (730 A.D.) as different nations.—Cf. Simeon Potter : *Our Language.*

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of bigger ones into smaller ones but, contrarily, through the coalescing of clan languages into tribal languages, of tribal languages into the languages of nationalities and of the languages of nationalities into the modern national languages.

Early tribal communities living cut off by hostile elemental forces against which there was as yet little defence, could not have had a common language spoken by all those tribes. Similarly, the great empires which spanned the face of the earth during the epoch of slavery did not have any language spoken by the entire mass of people living within that empire. Lacking a stable economic base of their own, these empires were militarily-held unstable conglomeration of tribes and clans living their own lives and speaking their own languages.

The case of Latin, sometimes described as the 'conquering tongue' of the Roman Empire, is often mentioned in support of the contention that Sanskrit occupied a similar position in India. Latin was, in fact, only a dialect, some two thousand years ago, of a little isolated district in middle Italy. The remains of at least two of its sister dialects, the Oscan and the Ubrian were in existence till the beginning of this century.[1] Wherever the Romans went they carried this language, so as to change the islands of life around them according to their own pattern. This artificial creation and recasting of city life was necessary because only through this could the imperial rule be accepted by one section of the conquered people and imposed on the rest. Latin thus grew into a non-colloquial language which the Roman Empire maintained as an official medium. After the end of the Empire, the ruling classes in the Middle Ages found it of great service. The Catholic Church adopted it as its official language, in this respect as in others, continuing the Imperial tradition. The feudal church found it apt enough that the eternal verities of an unchanging dogma should be primarily expounded and transmitted in an unchanging language. Though incomprehensible to the mass of the population, Latin persisted as the language of law, administration, scholarship and to some extent of the poetry of the ruling classes and later became the prerogative of the dominant feudal interests in the various countries of Europe. Ultimately the authority of Latin was challenged but this was not until the authority of the feudal classes itself was challenged.[2]

We shall see later that many artificial 'class-languages' or jargons came into existence differently in the different epochs of history. All these, however, arose out of and as off-shoots of one

1. Cf. Whitney : Language and its Study.
2. Cf. Prof. W.R. Lockwood : "Language and the Rise of Nations"—Science and Society, Vol. XVIII No. 3, Summer 1954.

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or more tribal and clan languages. Not having a separate grammatical system or a basic stock of words of their own and lacking linguistic independence, these were, necessarily, doomed to stagnation and extinction, along with the privileged sections of society which created them.

The question now arises whether Sanskrit was an artificial 'class-jargon' like Latin or a spoken language as has been claimed by most of the Indian and many European scholars of Sanskrit. Goldstucker, Keith and Leibich hold that even at the time of Pāṇini (fourth century B. C., shortly after Buddha) when early Prākrits seem to have come into their own as literary languages, Sanskrit was a "spoken language used by the cultured classes."[1] Dr. Vasudev Saran Aggarwal has drawn the same conclusion from his study of Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyayī*[2] and has described Sanskrit as the "standard speech of the *śiṣṭas*, *i.e.* cultured persons, who even without instruction[3] were capable of using the correct speech." Dr. Prabhatchandra Chakravarti after a long discussion of the subject remarks : "Sanskrit has been a spoken language not only in the times of Yāska and Pāṇini but we have sufficient evidence to believe that it continued to be so even at a much later period, we mean that of Kātayana and Pātaṇjali.....In the fertile period of its literary development it was undoubtedly a spoken language though its currency was possibly limited to the educated section of the upper class."[4]

The above contention that Sanskrit was the spoken language of the cultured classes is, however, not tenable. Brāhmins and the educated members of the ruling class living in India before the Christian era could not possess a separate mother tongue of their own for such a colloquial speech of the cultured few only could not have existed at all. Language as a means of intercourse within a society, ceases to be a 'language' unless it is the common speech of the whole society equally serving all classes. No society can subsist without a language common to all its members. If the same people could have had separate languages for the privileged and the unprivileged classes it would have resulted not only in the

1. A.B. Keith : History of Sanskrit Literature.
2. Dr. Vasudev Saran Aggarwal : India as Known to Pāṇini—University of Lucknow.
3. A Chinese pilgrim I-tsing, who visited India in the seventh century, A.D. described what a long process the learning of Sanskrit was. Children, he says, begin to learn the forty-nine letters and 10,000 compound letters at six. At eight they start learning grammar and at ten list of roots and the three appendices. At fifteen they begin to study commentaries on grammar and spend five years in learning it
4. Prabhatchandra Chakravarti : The Linguistic Speculations of the Hindus—University of Calcutta.

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cessation of exploitation, on which rests the very existence of the former, but also in the breakdown of all productive activity, eventually leading to the paralysis of the entire econcmic life and the disappearance of all that held society together.

As there cannot be separate colloquial languages with their own vocabulary and grammatical systems, separately for the privileged and the unprivileged classes, Sanskrit can only be an artificial class-language created out of and based on the grammatical system and vocabulary of the single common language of the entire society of those times.[1] Because of the impossibility of a separate spoken language of the 'cultured class' independent of the spoken language of the common people, Sanskrit can merely be a 'jargon' which came into existence as an off-shoot of the common colloquial language of those times. The fact that the 'cultured class' always did its literary creations in its special class-language and held discussions, within itself, through its medium, does not establish that it was the actual mother-tongne of anyone of its members, or that the first words spoken by the children of the cultured class were in that language.

It is not necessary here to discuss the arguments on which the claim of Sanskrit as a spoken language has been based, such as the inclusion by Pāṇini, in his purview, of linguistic forms relating to questions and answers, praise and censure, calling from a distance, greeting, terms of threat, mental deliberation, narration, friendly persuasion, haste, etc., and the narration of a story by Patāñjali of a controversy in which a charioteer not only speaks in Sanskrit but ably discusses the derivation of the word *prajitr* with a grammarian. Apart from the fact that such terms are as necessay in a jargon as in a colloquial speech, it may be mentioned that the statements in the Sanskrit texts should not be accepted uncritically. In the Ramayana, the *Vanar* chief Hāñuman is said to have delivered his message to Sita in Sanskrit.

One contention, commonly put forward, which needs to be considered particularly, is that a huge system of grammar like that of Pāṇini could not have practically come into existence, if Sanskrit had not been current as a spoken tongue at that time (fourth century B.C.).[2] Pāṇini's system of grammar could not have, all at once, been distilled by him out of a colloquial Sanskrit. In fact a language guided by such rigid rules of grammar and phonetics could not have been a colloquial speech,

1. J. Vendryes : Special languages are the result of social divisions In principle, therefore. they are as natural as dialects, but they are always born of the very heart of a common language from which they usually continue to draw their sustenance.
2. Cf. Prabhatchandra Chakravarti : Linguistic Speculations of the Hindus.

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nor could it be the mother-tongue of even the most learned of *pandits*.

Grammar is the result of a process of abstraction performed by the human mind over a long period of time and is the achievement not of a single person but of scores of persons and generations. Pāṇini himself refers to works of several grammarians who preceded him. This process of abstraction started soon after the cumulative creation of the society in the course of several centuries was collected and sifted into Ṛig Veda, where speech—*vāk*—is a deity though it is stated to have been 'invented for the performance of sacrifice' (Ṛig Veda 4.11). Later this abstraction became all the more necessary and elaborate as the languages of the people drifted away from the language of the Vedas not only through the natural process of development but also by the absorption of several 'non-Aryan' elements. The analytical methods of Sanskrit grammar, the principles of derivation as enunciated in *Nirukta* and the exhaustive list of roots were gradually perfected and made rigid. Seventeen writers of *Nirukta* are mentioned as having preceded Yāska, himself a predecessor of Pāṇini. Slowly and slowly grammar became not merely the medium through which knowledge of scriptural language was acquired and preserved but a science by itself studied for its own sake, where the very fabric of language, *śabda, vāk, nād*, etc., was deified and made an instrument of metaphysical speculations. This process went on till, by the time of Pāṇini, it became, as has been pointed out by Colebrooke, "the endless pursuit of exceptions and limitations so disjoining the general precepts that the reader cannot keep in view their intended connections and mutual relations. He wanders in an intricate maze and the key of the labyrinth is continually slipping from his hands."

It will, therefore, be more appropriate to describe the Sanskrit language as a 'grammar', the appellation given by Dante to Latin and Greek. Dante in his *De Vulgari Eloquentia* raised for the first time in European history theoretical as well as practical problems associated with the language question. Dante maintained that Latin was a secondary, rather artificial, language or 'grammar' which in the days of yore had been constituted out of the living vernaculars in order to bring regularity and permanence to the written word. Dante, similarly, refers to the Greek people having a 'Grammar' like the Latin possessed by the *Romance* people.[1]

A study of the origin of the word 'Sanskrit' would show how correct it is to describe this artificial language as a 'grammar.' In

1. Cf. Prof. W.R. Lockwood : "Language and the Rise of Nations"—Science and Society, Volume XVIII No. 3—Summer 1954.

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Sanskrit analysis of speech does not stop with the classification of speech but proceeds further to the analysis of these parts of speech into their ultimate elements, *viz.*, stems and formative suffixes. This analysis called *Sanskāra* forms the fundamental principle of Sanskrit grammar and accounts for the popular designation of Sanskrit as applied to the sacred language of the ancient grammarians.[1] The name Sanskrit began to be applied to the language of the sacred texts only after the grammatical system based upon *Sanskāra* had been fully evolved.

The literary language of the Vedas was known as *Chaṇdas* or *Naigama* as against the spoken languages described as *Bhaśa or Laukika*. There is ample evidence both in Yāska's *Nirukta* and Pāṇini's *Aśtādhyayi* to show that a distinction was made early between the literary language of the Vedas and the spoken language of the people. Pātanjali referred to this well-marked distinction just in the beginning of his *Śabdanusāsana* and said elsewhere that Vedic words were stereotyped to be learnt from the Vedas only, while popular words are to be taken from the current speech.

Chaṇdas, as the language of the Rig Veda was called, seems to have come about as a result of the mixing up of some tribal languages of the early Aryans living in the north-west of India.[2] This would have happened over a long period of time with the language of a centrally situated or numerically or otherwise superior tribe providing the grammatical system and the basic vocabulary, the other languages enriching and modifying it. Such a common non-colloquial language would include words coined out of commonly understood roots or otherwise widely known over the distinctive words of the colloquial languages.

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1. Cf. Prabhatchandra Chakravarty : The Linguistic Speculations of the Hindus.

2. Reference to the mixing of tribes (and of languages) is available in the Vedas. In Rig Veda, the *Bharata* tribe under King Sudas is stated to have fought ten tribes including *Purus*. Both these names do not appear subsequently and their place is taken up by the *Kurus*. This tribe living in the areas near about the present *Kurukshetra* is believed by Dr Dhirendra Verma to have given Sanskrit its basic form (Cf. *Madhyadesh ki Sahityic Bhasha* in *Madhuker* April-August 1944). It, however, seems that the Afghan Academy of History has collected much evidence from a comparative study of Sanskrit and Pāshto about the Rig Vedic language having originated on the west of Indus, but the evidence furnished in *Aryana* published by the Government of Afghanistan is very scanty. Pāshto, however, is the only language of the Indian sub-continent which counts figures as in Sanskrit. Unlike other Indian languages, its words for nineteen, twenty-nine, thirty-nine etc. are one-minus-twenty, one-minus-thirty, one-minus-forty, etc. This is the practice in Sanskrit also.

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Referring to Homeric Greek, George Thomson remarks : "The language of the poems differs from all the dialects of Greece, spoken and literary. It is on the face of it a mixed dialect—mainly Æolic and Ionic, with a good deal of Arcado, Cyprian and a touch here and there of Attic."[1] Early Sanskrit must have similarly grown as a non-colloquial language of prayers and songs out of the colloquial speeches of the Vedic Aryans who "came in clanse and their languages had dialectal differences from clan to clan."[2] Adolf Kaegi referring to the Rig Vedic language states : "This language is an exceedingly ancient dialect, which differs in all grammatical points (accentuation, phonetics, word-formation, declension, conjugation, syntax) and in its vocabulary, from the later artificial Indian language, the Sanskrit of the law books, epics, dramas etc. in a much greater degree than, *e.g.*, the language of Homer from the Attic.....In a certain sense this dialect too is artistic or poetic speech developed in the guilds of singers."[3]

Some of the Vedic hymns might have been written in the tribal languages[4]—Rig Vedic hymns indicate the names of the tribal *Rishis* to whom these were revealed—and the language of these hymns later modified and altered when these were collected and arranged by Krishna Dwaipayana, traditionally described as the Arranger. This earliest tribal language also would generally be non-colloquial because unless it was more lilting and primeval in comparison with the common speech, it would not be able to attain in a high degree the qualities of rhythm, fantasy and magic so necessary for collective labour and for effecting changes in the external world by mimesis. Imposing illusion on reality was then the main function of poetry which had yet to emerge from magic.[5] Every member of the tribe was a poet and every tribal language had also to possess its jargon of poetry in order to raise it to a higher power. That artificiality of the language of poetry was, however, natural because poetry being the necessary vehicle of production was then organically connected with society. Later, when society was rent into classes, poetry emerged out of magic.

1. George Thomson : Studies in Ancient Greek Society.
2. S. K. Chatterji : Indo-Aryan and Hindi.
3. Adolf Kaegi : Studies in Rig Vedic India.
4. TheBible was similarly written in several tribal languages. The word 'polyglot' meaning 'of many languages' is specially applied to the languages of the Bible. The name Bible itself is a plural diminutive of *biblos* (book) and means "the little books.
5. The magical power speech was believed to possess is indicated by a hymn in Rig-Veda where *Vāk* or speech says about itself
"I am the Queen, gatherer of treasures, I am intelligent, the first of those, who deserve sacrifice : the gods have made me manifold, standing in many places, entering into many things.....
"I breathe like the wind, holding to all things ; beyond the sky, beyond this earth, such a one am I by my power."

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The more it ceased to express the aspirations of society, the more it cut itself away from society and thus gradually emerged the art of reciting poetry as a profession in itself. It is also possible that the work of evolving the artificial language of Rig Veda as well as that of codifying it was done by these professional reciters. The signs of class divisions[1] in Aryan society are not wanting in the Rig Veda.

Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji has pointed out that Sanskrit "was not exactly the home language of any part of the country" and that "at first, out of the various Aryan dialects grew up a literary speech—a *Kunstsprache* or language for artistic purpose—in which poets composed hymns about their gods which were collected and written down in the Vedas a little after 1000 B.C."[2]

After Vedic Sanskrit came the *Saṇhitas*—the word itself meaning 'close combination of letters'. This fixed combination of words in the *maṇtras* marked by a rigid and unrelaxable order, so common in the Sanskrit language, became necessary not only for the writing of hymns but also for preserving them through oral transmission. Later when the *Brāhmaṇas* were added to the *Saṇhitas*, the new prose form, drawing upon the vocabulary coined for the *mantras*, acquired some of its rigidity and immutability, making prose also artificial like the language of the hymns. By that time, this language, not yet called Sanskrit, had begun to be stereotyped by rules of grammar. These rules became increasingly strict, as the spoken languages of the various tribes ,now somewhat mixed, grew on and went forward. With the further perfecting of grammar and the development of the *nirukta* or etymological glossaries, the elaborate and verbose prose style of the *Brāhmaṇas* came to a close and there arose a still more artificial style known as *Sūtra*, characterized by extreme brevity and conciseness.

Sanskrit is thus divided into three periods—the Vedic ending with the *Mahābhārata* (9th century B.C.), the Middle Sanskrit from *Brāhmaṇas* to Pāṇini (fourth century B.C.) and thereafter Classical Sanskrit when this language is stated to have gone rapidly out of currency, giving way to *Early Magādhi* and *Pāli*, the Prākrits which came into their own under Aśoka (third century B.C.) and Kaniśka (beginning of the Christian era). The reign of Chandra Gupta II which was the high watermark of Sanskrit language and literature came much later.

It has been shown above that Sanskrit was from its very beginning a non-colloquial language though in its earliest stage it

1. Cf. S. S. Narula : Class Struggle and Ancient Indian Literature—*New Literature*, Delhi, July 1947.
2. Dr. S. K. Chatterji : Indo-Aryan and Hindi.

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was the common property of all. After the emergence of classes it was modified into a class jargon. It became more and more stereotyped as the spread of iron and the growth of iron-age cities before the *Mahābhārata* wars enriched the languages spoken by the people with particular rapidity. The artificial nature of Sanskrit became more marked when several elements of indigenous languages of India got absorbed into the colloquial Aryan speeches as a result of the mixing up of races after the *Mahābhārata* wars. Stuart Piggott has stated that the Indian turban still common in North-West India "is surely derived from the Harappa culture."[1] Undoubtedly much of the cultural accumulation of the Harappa man has also survived till today. Important post-Vedic gods have been traced to the Indus civilization, so also the Aryan Swastika[2] and the very priest-ridden character of Indian society. Some have even traced the Brahmi and Devanagari scripts to Harappa.[3] A language, on the other hand, is amongst the hardest of human creations to die and almost impossible to be destroyed. There is no doubt that the Harappa speech must have greatly influenced the spoken languages of the Aryan people by the time of the *Brāhamaṇas* (800 B.C.) where the use of turban is first mentioned.

Defining Prākrits as the unrefined or the natural speech of the people, some Indologists have described these as anterior to or contemporary of Vedic Sanskrit—the refined language. There is no doubt that Prākrits, the written records of which have come down to us are a later phenomenon. It has also been mentioned that the refined and the unrefined speeches after their early separation began to flow in two separate streams, spoken by two different strata of people seldom coming into contact with each other. This is incorrect because as has been shown above, throughout this period, the colloquial speeches of the society, still mainly tribal in nature, were common to all classes. The privileged classes, though they employed Sanskrit as their class jargon, none the less continued to share the common speech of the people, continuously drawing upon it and borrowing from it for the purposes of creating and sustaining their artificial class-

1. Stuart Piggott : Prehistoric India.
2. Rev. Fr. Heras states in *India, the Empire of the Swastika* : "Thousands of years before the Aryans invaded India, the inhabitants of Mohenjo Daro (Nandur), belonging to the Dravadian race, used some small amulets with an inscribed Swastika. Besides the Swastika is also found in their inscriptions. No doubt remains at present about the origin of the Swastika. It is a Dravadian symbol which was adopted by the Aryans, as so many other institutions, when they entered India.
3. G. R. Hunter : The Script of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro.

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language. This accounts for the presence of Tamil[1] and Prākrit[2] words in the Sanskrit language.

As the common languages of the tribes enriched themselves with the enrichment of the productive resources of society and as new words were coined and old ones given new meanings through the specialization of general terms and generalization of special terms, the privileged classes continued to draw upon these creations of the people, though the earlier grammatical forms and word-structures were generally retained. The borrowed words were often modified to make them conform to those forms and structures.[3] No doubt new words were also coined in the literary language to serve the need of poetic imagery and diction but it is not difficult to guess which of the several synonyms in Sanskrit were borrowed from the people and which artificially created.[4] For example for the word 'tree' some of the Sanskrit equivalents are *vriksha* (originated from the idea of cutting), *taru* (idea of giving shelter), *śakhi* and *druma* (from the fact of its possessing branches), *anokaha* (from that of obstructing the passage of carts) and *padapa* (from drinking water through feet) ; the first two of these have come down to us almost unchanged in the modern Indian languages. The ruling class gave its own specialized meaning to the general terms used by the people. *Govesana* which meant search for a lost cow became an enquiry into a problem, *lakshana* meaning a sign became 'definition' and the meaning of *darshana* were changed from 'to see' to 'philosophy'. Quite often the two words having the same meaning in the spoken language such as *sukha* and *ananda* were given different meanings in the literary language equally often the same word was given different meanings on different occasions—*rasa* meant mercury in medical science and poetic element in

1. Cf. Nellur Swami S. Gnana Prakasar : "Linguistic Evidence for the Common Origin of the Dravadians and Indo-Europeans"—Tamil Culture, January 1953.
2. Cf. Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya : "The Influence of Prākrit on Sanskrit"—Calcutta Review, April 1952.
3. Kumarila has frankly admitted that the Aryans used to pick up some words from foreign languages and changed them into Sanskrit with necessary alteration.
4. Vedic Sanskrit has more synonyms than the Classical Sanskrit The colloquial speeches of the Vedic tribes are in fact, likely to have more words with the same meanings than have come down to us through the Vedic Sanskrit. In early societies man used several words for different aspects of or objects in nature he was completely dependent on. The Bedouin Arabs, who rely for survival on the camel, rarely use the general term but their language is rich in words describing each particular sort of camel. Farley Mowat states in *People of the Deer* (Michael Joseph, London) that in the language of *Ihalmiut* tribe of Eskimos "there are dozens of words which mean 'deer' in some specialised sense."

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poetics. Gradually many of the colloquial words were discarded as new ones were coined through analogy and metaphor such as *balaka* for the rising sun and *kshetra* for body, as in *Gita*. Despite all the rigidity of grammatical forms which Sanskrit tended to acquire, some new grammatical elements continued to be borrowed from the colloquial speeches of the tribes. The Vedic *na* meaning both negation and similarity is likely to have dropped its second meaning first in the colloquial languages.[1]

It will be seen from the above that Sanskrit was never the spoken language of the people and that it never acquired linguistic independence, even when, after the emergence of classes, it was departing more and more from the colloquial speeches. The best elements in the Sanskrit language, as also in Sanskrit literature, were the creation of the people though often modified by the privileged minority to serve its class interests. The origin of Modern Hindi or any other language of today should not, therefore, be traced to Sanskrit, Vedic or Classical. The modern Indian languages have no doubt descended from the tribal languages of Vedic times, but the Sanskrit language because of its artificial and class nature contains only a deformed picture of those colloquial speeches out of which it was born and alongside which it continued to exist.

1. Some dialectal areas in the Punjab still retain *na* for similarity.

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CHAPTER THREE

THE SOCIAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE PRAKRIT AND APABHRAMSA LANGUAGES

Prākrit is the common term employed to indicate a large variety of non-colloquial languages and dialects, attested by specimens, traces or allusions in secular as well as religious literature in India from about 500 B.C., whereafter Sanskrit is stated to have gradually ceased to be a spoken language, to the 10th century A.D. when the modern Indian languages are believed to have had their beginning. This period of one and a half millennium in the linguistic history of India, described as Middle Indo-Aryan, presents a confusing picture. The same language has been described differently by different grammarians and equally often widely different languages in different periods given the same name. The classical definition of Prākrit excludes from the group Pāli while others treat it as marking the beginning of the Prākrit period. Sometimes several varieties of 'incorrect Sanskrit' some of which used by *Mahāyāna* school of Buddhists in their 'mixed Sanskrit' works are included in this group and at others Inscriptional Prākrits of the period of Aśoka and those discovered in Chinese Turkistan are excluded from it. Even though many varieties of Prākrit were admittedly mixed languages, somewhat "less artificial than Sanskrit",[1] and embraced vast areas inhabiting several clans, tribes and embryonic nationalities, these are put forward as the spoken languages of those times and as precursor of modern Indian languages.

The languages of this period are divided into three groups—the Early Prākrits (Pāli and Old Māgadhī—500 B. C. to 100 A.D.), Middle Prākrits (Śaurasenī, Māgadhī and their variations—100 A.D. to 600 A. D.) and Later Prākrits (Apabhraṁśās—600 A.D. to 1100 A.D.)[2] The relationship between the Middle Prākrits

1. Prabhatchandra Chakravarty : Linguistic Speculations of the Hindus, (page 293)—University of Calcutta, 1933.

2. S.M. Katre gives the following classification of Prākrit languages in "Prākrit Languages and their Contribution to Indian Culture":—

   (1) RELIGIOUS PRĀKRITS: Pāli, the language of Southern canons and post-canonical works ; Ardhamāgadhī, the language of oldest Jaina śutras also described as Ārsā ; the Jaina varieties of Mahārāstri, Saurasenī and Apabhramśas,

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and Later Prākrits or Apabhraṁśas is believed to be that of mother and daughter, the two stages generally having the same names. The grammarians of those times claimed the blood relationship of both Prākrits and Apabhraṁśas with Sanskrit, dividing the languages of India mainly into three stages, namely Sanskrit, Prākrit and Apabhraṁśa. Daṇḍin, Bhāmaha and Bhojarāja have all recognised this three-fold classification.

The period of Early Prākrits was one of the break-down of slave economy in the 'Midlands' and Eastern India. The epoch of slavery lasted a few centuries longer in the north-west of the Indian sub-continent and in Afghanistan—areas a little less affected by the *Mahābhārata* wars. Slaves were never as numerous in India as in the civilizations of the West. There was a vast hinterland, particularly to the east, where the slaves and the craftsmen, now much fallen in status,[1] could run away. This had retarded, in this country, the growth of an economy based upon the large-scale exploitation of slave labour

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← attested in the narrative literature forming an extensive branch of Jaina literature.

(2) LITERARY : Mahārāstrī, Śaurasenī, Māgadhī, Paiśachī and Apabhraṁśa and their sub-varieties.

(3) DRAMATIC : Mahārāstrī, Śaurasenī, Māgadhī and their varieties ; *Old Ardhamāgadhi* attested in the plays of Aśvaghosa ; minor dialects such as *Dhākki* and *Tākki*.

(4) PRĀKRITS DESCRIBED BY THE GRAMMARIANS : these include five or six dialects attested in Sanskrit plays and in Middle Indo-Aryan narrative literature, such as Mahārāstrī, Śaurasenī, Māgadhī, Paisāchi, Culika-Paisachi and Apabhraṁsā, with their several dialects. In this category are included the description of Prākrits given in rhetorical or musical compositions such as Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra*, or *Gitalankara* or Namisadhu's commentary on Rudrata's *Kāvyālankāra*.

(5) EXTRA INDIAN PRĀKRITS : the language of Prākrit *Dhammapada*, fragments of which were discovered in Khotan, written in *Kharosthī* characters ; *Niya* and Khotanese Prākrits, the language of documents found in Central Asia.

(6) INSCRIPTIONAL PRĀKRITS : from the period of Aśoka downwards, written in *Brāhmī* and *Kharosthī* characters, found within the whole of India and part of Ceylon. Under these are also to be considered copper plate grants and coin legends, thus covering the whole domain of littic and metal records.

(7) POPULAR SANSKRIT : Hindu, Buddhist and Jain. These varieties contain such usages which were not recognised as proper for refined Sanskrit of classical variety.

1. Aryan Vaisyas had by then sunk from Aryanhood to slavery. It is borne out by the reference, in *Gītā* that "Even though woman, *vaiśya* and the *Śūdra* slave are all born for slavery they can obtain salvation in heaven if they follow me".

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and of a wide-spread urban life built thereon. This period of the gradual break-down of slave-economy, everywhere marked by intense mental activity, was particularly of great spiritual and intellectual awakening in India. North India was, in the period immediately before Buddha, bursting out of the 'dark ages' which commenced with the immense destruction of the *Mahābhārata* wars and the subsequent inroads into the Gangetic valley from west, south and east by Nagas and other tribes,[1] often abetted and joined by the slaves and unprivileged classes in the towns. The unparalleled revolutionary upsurge this had unleashed is indicated by the fact that even Arjuna complained that in these battles against the Nāgas and others when he reached for his famous magical[2] weapons "they would not come to him." Lord Krishna who destroyed the city of Benares by hurling a flaming *diskos* and who restored the burnt city, could later do nothing when his own town Dwarika in Kathiawar was attacked and a civil war broke out. Helpless, he ordered the evacuation of the inhabitants to Prabhāsa, while the ruling groups were killing one another or were being massacred by the Nishādas.

Agriculture was growing on a vast scale and rose to a higher level as the technical achievements of the epoch of slavery became more widespread and closer to the people with their dispersal from the dwindling or disappearing towns to the rural areas. Use of iron diverted from the making of weapons became more common as it grew more plentiful with the shifting of the centre of gravity from Hastināpura to minerally rich Bihar.[3] However, the trend towards feudalism retarded the advance of productive techniques, which had in India already remained incompletely developed because of the lack of the full flowering of slave

1. S. A. Dange observes in *India from Primitive Communism to Slavery*: "Contrary to expectations of either side, the war resulted in such a massacre of both the victors and the vanquished, that the winning *Pāṇḍavas* were completely bankrupt at the end of the struggle and almost all the leading men, kings and princes, fine warriors and generals fell on the battlefield All the states which participated in the struggle as also the allied *Gana-Sanghas* were thoroughly weakened and shattered by the fierceness of the massacre. The slave-owners' states and the ruling leaders of the *Gana-Sanghas* having been weakened, the Nāga, Nishāda and other tribes got a breathing space and in order to win back their old position began to attack the once powerful, much feared and much hated Arya *kulas* and their armies."

2. J. D. Bernal points out in *Science and Society* that at that period good steel was so rare and highly prized that weapons made out of it were deemed to be magic.

3. A. L. Basham states in *The Wonder that was India*: "Chief source of iron in India was South Bihar, and the control of the route from the iron producing areas around the modern Ranchi may well have been one of the chief factors in the early rise of Māgadhan power"

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economy. As the demand for useful sciences became less and less, the intellectual efforts of the people were directed towards a new feature of civilization, organised religious faiths.

This period was noteworthy for 'Wanderers'—Paribhājakas (Sanskrit *Parivrājakas*)—scholars who wandered from place to place for more than half the year engaging in conversational discussions on matters of ethics, philosophy and nature-lore. It was as much a quest for knowledge as the teaching of one's own system of beliefs. These Wanderers included women and also students who were represented as begging, as did students in medieval Europe. There were halls put up for their accommodation and for discussions. Pavilians had been constructed in the groves adjoining settlements and there were rest-houses (*chowltries*) everywhere for them. These wandering scholars were not *munis* or *vrātyas* of the earlier period, nor were they *vanaprasthas* or *sanyāsis* of the later one. There was great freedom of thought resulting in a bewildering variety of doctrines. Those holding similar set of opinions sometimes organised themselves into *Sanghas*. The Buddhist order was called *Sakyaputtiya Samanas* and the Jain order, which was older than the Buddhist, was called *Niganthas*—the Unfettered. There must have been scores of others, like *Ājīvakas*—'The Men of the Livelihood'—a sect quite widespread till the time of Asoka, whose intellectual activities, unlike those of the Buddhists and Jains, are now unknown to us.

This was the period when *Jātaka* tales were created and enriched by the people mostly on the basis of the earlier folk heritage. Only a small proportion of these have come down to us through their Buddhist modifications. This was also the period when the material, some of which later formed the voluminous *Mahābhārata*, was created by the people in the form of *Akhanas* (Sanskrit *Akhyanas*).[1] These too were the times when ballads were written and minstrels sang about the idealised memories of the tribal heroes of the past, as there were no contemporary victories to sing of. This material gathered out of the common cultural property[2] and "from gems falling from

1. S. K. Chatterji : "The historical traditions, ballads and songs current among the born Aryans, among the mixed Aryans and non-Aryan people who had become Aryanised, were told or sung in the vernacular forms of Aryan, and then altered to Sanskrit to form the *nuclei* of the Mahabharata and the Puranas, in which particularly in the Mahabharata, many a dialectal form has survived." (Indo-Aryan and Hindi)

2. T. W. Rhys-Davids : "We find then, that single verses, single poems, and single Cantos, had all been in existence before the work assumed its present shape. This is very suggestive as to the manner of growth not only of this book, but of all the Indian literature of this Period. It grew up in the schools and was the result rather of communistic than of individual effort."

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the lips of the people", later provided material for Vālmiki's *Rāmāyaṇa*. With the sharpening of the class conflict, as mythology gave place to "true religion" and as religion ossified into dogma, the number of *vanaprasthas*—hermits—increased and Vedic orthodoxy began to be given a more elaborate world of phantasy, but one now with a class structure. These speculations, many of them inspired by intellectual freedom and thirst for knowledge, later provided germinal bases for *Upaniṣads* and *Puraṇas*.

The languages of those creations of the people differed not only from area to area but also according to the nature of the work. Those works would sometimes be in the language of the tribe occupying a dominant position in the area at others in a mixture of the tribal speeches, arising mainly out of the wanderings of *Parivrajakas* from one tribal area to the other, which must have made the evolution of a common vocabulary and a somewhat common non-colloquial language inevitable. Aśokan Māgadhī was probably such a mixture of Māgadhan dialects later modified according to the area of the inscription.[1] This language commonly described as Old Māgadhī was probably less artificial than its posterior Māgadhī of the Prākrit grammarians. It gave grammatical structure to various Inscriptional Prākrits and no doubt was represented, in vocabulary at least, in a fairly comprehensive manner in Pali. The artificial character of Asokan Māgadhī and Pāli is generally recognised and these are not, therefore, included among the Classical Prākrits, though as we shall see later the former were nearer the spoken languages than the latter.

As a medium of the literature of religious expression, Pāli had a very long career from the third century B. C. to eleventh century A. D. Its earliest stage is available in metrical *gathas* which are interspersed with prose passages in Pāli canons. Next comes the language of canonical prose passages and after that the prose of early non-canonical works such as the *Malindapanha*, the language of prose commentaries etc. Last comes the language of poetical works which approximates the pattern laid down in the Sanskrit literature.

This language of the *Hīnayāna* school of Buddhism is not a uniform language having clear-cut features. On the other hand it shows the influence of a large number of dialects of those times in different stages of evolution, although in its linguistic

1. Rhys Davids : "M. Senart has shown conclusively, by an exhaustive study of the whole subject that they (the inscriptions) at no time, either in spelling or in vocabulary, present us with a faithful picture of any vernacular." (Buddhist India)

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features it is the earliest representative of the stage described as Middle Indo-Aryan.

There is no doubt about the artificial character of Pāli, which was not a language of Māgadha but of 'Midlands'. It probably resulted from the mixing up of the dialects of Muthra and Ujjain. King of "Madhura" on Jumna, bore the title of *Avanti-putto* during Buddha's time and it seems that a branch of the royal family at Ujjain had come to rule over Śaurasena with its capital at "Madhura" (the present Muthra and mentioned by Al-Beruni[1] as *Mahura*). This non-colloquial language is likely to have arisen as the court language of that kingdom. This "Madhura" was visited by Buddha and was the residence of Mahā Kaccāna, one of his most influential disciples to whom tradition attributes the first grammatical treatment of the Pāli language and after whom the oldest Pali grammar is named. Scholars of the eminence of Sylvain Levi and Prof. Heinrich Luders have given ample evidence to show that Buddha's discourses were first composed in some dialect of Māgadha and were later translated into Pāli. Subsequently, Pāli got driven out of its home—the 'Midlands'—and became merely the language of schools, in India as far south as Kancipura and Tanjore.

The period of Middle or Classical Prākrits begins with the first century A. D. and Vararuchi one of the earliest Prākrit grammarians is believed to be one of the 'nine gems' at the court of Vikramāditya at Ujjain. Incidentally, the Śakas also of Ujjain were the first important dynasty to use Sanskrit, the inscription at Girnar being the earliest written document we possess. As the process of feudalization advanced and as the feudal serfdom spread and consolidated despite the temporary set-back under the Mauryas, literary languages based upon or nearer the languages of the people also underwent a change and the Middle Prākrit period marks the increasing artificialization of the literary languages. Curious dialects half-way between the spoken and the dead languages came into existence, sometimes called 'Mixed Sanskrit', at others 'Mixed Prākrit.' Literary languages born out of the colloquial speeches got their terminations Sanskritized, spoken words were altered to make them look more learned and thus came into existence literary forms wholly or partly artificial with no existence in living speech. As the Prākrits lost the advantage of being nearer the languages of the people, their replacement by Sanskrit as a literary language became inevitable. The more these hybrids became like Sanskrit, the easier it was for the new ruling class to impose their language just as they had imposed their domination. Thus we have under

1. Kitab-ul-Hind—Anjuman-e-Taraqui-e-Urdu, Delhi.

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the Guptas the unprecedented development of the Sanskrit language.[1]

Changes in religion and social life were taking place side by side with changes in language. Indian feudalism, inferior

1. T.W. Rhys-Davids gives the following list of languages in India till the middle of the first millennium A D. :—

"(1) The dialects spoken by the Aryan invaders of India, and by the Dravidians, and Kolarian inhabitants they found there.

(2) Ancient High Indian, the Vedic.

(3) The dialects spoken by the Aryans, now often united by marriage and by political union with the Dravidians, in their settlements either along the spurs of the Himalaya range from Kashmir to Nepal, or down the Indus Valley and then across to Avanti, or along the valleys of the Jumna and the Ganges.

(4) Second High Indian, Brahmanic, the literary language of the Brahmanas and Upanisads.

(5) The vernaculars from Gandhara to Magdha at the time of the rise of Buddhism, not so divergent probably as not be more or less mutually intelligible.

(6) A conversational dialect, based probably on the local dialect of Savatthi, the capital of Kosala, and in general use among Kosala officials, among merchants, and among the more cultured classes not only throughout the Kosala dominions, but east and west from Delhi to Patna and north and south from Savatthi to Avanti.

(7) Middle High Indian, Pali, the literary language based on No. 6, probably in the form in which it was spoken in Avanti.

(8) The Aśoka dialect, founded on No 6, especially as spoken at Patna, but much influenced by the aim at approximation to Nos. 7 and 11.

(9) The Ardha-Magadhi, the dialect of Jain Angas.

(10) The Lena dialect of the cave inscriptions from the second century B.C. onwards based on No. 8 but approximating more and more to the next, No. 11, until it merges altogether into it.

(11) Standard High Indian, Sanskrit—elaborated, as to form and vocabulary, out of No. 4; but greatly enriched by words first taken from Nos. 5 to 7, and then brought back, as to form, into harmony with No. 4. For long the literary language only of the priestly schools, it was first used in inscriptions and coins from the second century A.D. onwards and from the fourth and fifth centuries onwards became the *lingua franca* for all India.

(12) The vernaculars of India of the fifth century A.D. and onwards.

(13) Prakrit, the literary form of these vernaculars, and specially of Maharastri. These are derived, not from No. 11 (Sanskrit), but from No. 12, the later forms of the sister dialects to No. 6." (Buddhist India).

Only Nos. (1), (3), (5) and (12) of the above languages were the actual spoken languages of the people.

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economically and militarily as it was, suffered repeated set-backs as wave after wave of conquerors came pouring down from the north-west in the century preceding and following the Christian era. First came the Bacterian Greeks who set up republics in the Panjab. Then came Śakas who reached as far as Muthra, Malwa and Kathiawar. They were followed by Pahlavas and the Kuṣaṇas, the latter one of the six Chinese tribes of Yūeh Chih, who had driven Śakas into India. In the east of the country also, there was a general picture of anarchy after the Mauryan Empire. With deterioration in agriculture and other means of production, the goods produced became less and less. As a result of that the share-out became more and more coercive and rigid. The increasing misery of the exploited classes was reflected in the promise of the greater loveliness of the life hereafter, provided one lead the good life, that of obedience. The lack of stability of Indian feudalism, with its several inherent defects, was further heightened during this period by the paucity of public works so necessary for tropical agriculture. The needed stability was provided by the caste and the joint family systems but this further deformed India's semi-feudalism. The caste system did so by consolidating forms of exploitation based on slavery side by side with the development of feudal relations and the joint family system tended to eliminate large landed property which was one of the principal features of feudalism in Europe.

These developments not only tore India to fragments but resulted in much deterioration in productive resources with the consequent set-back to trade within the country and with the West. Much of the technical knowledge was also lost. The production of chemically pure iron, sample of which is available in the iron pillar at Mehrauli, and the art of carving out, polishing and transporting Aśokan pillars weighing as much as fifty tons and measuring some forty feet, are some of the several technical achievements of the early period of feudalism which were lost as feudalism became finally encrusted in the post-Gupta period. Drain of gold resulting from trade with India was an important cause of the financial difficulties of the Roman Empire from the reign of Nero onwards.[1] How much India lost from the virtual ceasing of the trade with the West during the millennium after the Guptas is borne out by the fact that many of the achievements which made possible a leap forward from feudalism to capitalism in Europe came from China through that country's trade with Byzantium.[2] The heavy plough designed in Central

1. Cf, E.H. Warmington : Commerce between the Roman Empire and India; Cambridge, 1928

2. Jack Lindsay states in *Byzantium Into Europe* : "The contribution of Central Asia and Central Europe (to the making of modern

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Asia or Siberia, requiring the harnessing of a team of as many as eight oxen, which provided the technological basis of medieval manor did not come to India. Feudalism was the age of the horse in the field and on the road. In India horse always remained a luxury animal and the horse-collar and the horse-shoe, though invented in Central Asia, reached India much later than elsewhere. The isolation of the tribes and village communities was further solidified by the development of the 'village system' resulting from 'the domestic union of agriculture and manufacturing pursuits'. This 'village system' was based upon independent caste organisations attending to different items of work and on the institution of village headman, the latter though incorporated into the quasi-feudal system, also prevented the growth of contractual relations between the landlord and the vassal which constituted the very basis of European feudalism.

The above circumstances, though they made the merger of tribal languages on any large scale impossible, could not hold back the emergence of some artificial class-languages of the trading communities which were firmly organised into guilds. Sanskrit, however, remained enthroned as the language of law and scholarship though not generally of administration and trade. Even the grammars of the Middle Prākrits were written in Sanskrit. It is no accident that Buddhim and Jainism continued to be current among the mercantile classes almost upto the end of the first millennium A.D. and Pāli, Ardha-Māgadhi and Māgadhi, driven from the places of their origin, continued to be nurtured by these mercantile communities in Central and South India. The trading communities stood to lose most from constant violence and warfare very much discouraged by these religions. It is also not an accident that the only great empire during the period, though necessarily feudal in nature, was by Harṣa, who was described by Hsuan Tsang as a vaisya.[1]

Saurasena was during those times the name of the territory around Muthra. The most important of the Middle Prākrit—Saurasenī seems to have arisen under the influence of the trading communities of Muthra and the neighbouring cities. "Madhura" on Jumna is barely mentioned during Buddha's times,

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Europe) are in fact hard to separate from one another. We must discard later political geography and realise that in those days something of single region stretched from Western Europe to the Altai mountains"

1. Hsuan Tsang—Translated by Watters. Dr. Bhupendra Nath Datta refers to a newly discovered Buddhist work '*Manjusrimulakalpa*' which mentions Harśa as a *vaiśya* and describes in glowing terms his wars against the Brahmin kings of West Bengal; (Studies in Indian Social Polity).

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but it is described in *Malindapanha* as one of the most famous places in India. Though Saurasena kingdom extended for a short while only from modern Lahore to modern Allahabad, the *vaiśyas*, organised in their guilds, continued to retain their importance in Muthra and other towns in Northern India. Later Harṣa, himself a *vaiśya*, when reviving the glory of the Gupta epoch, also gave a new impetus to the Saurasenī Prākrit. This Śaurasenī in its Apabhraṁśa form again received a fillip when the Gurjara-Pratihāras, also belonging to a low cast, set up their kingdom at Kanyakubj in the Saurasena area. They encouraged trade and brought about prosperity by building vast irrigation works. One of them, was the lake at Bhojpur near Bhopal 250 square miles in area, later destroyed by Muslim invaders, which remains till today the greatest achievement of irrigation works in India.

Undue emphasis has been given to the presence of Prākrits in Sanskrit dramas and this is taken as a proof of the Prākrits being the spoken languages. In dramas the characters talk, not the vernaculars, but literary Prākrits. At the time "when the dramas were written everyone in ordinary daily life "spoke neither Sanskrit nor Prākrit, but simply the vernacular"[1] Dr. S. K. Chatterji has also emphasized the fact that "the artificial character of most of the literary forms of Prākrits has also to be taken into consideration."[2] The most important among these, the Saurasenī, "shows greater adhesion to Sanskrit than other forms of Prākrit."[3] Mahārāstrī has now been recognised as somewhat later form of Sauraseni, and as a language of 'the great kingdom' of Doab and not that of Mahārāstra.[4] In fact, Śaurasenī and Mahārāstrī are not employed as the languages of different people but of different kinds

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1. Rhys-Davids : Buddhist India.
2. S. K. Chatterji : Indo-Aryan and Hindi.
3. Prabhat Chandra Chakravarti : The Linguistic Speculations of the Hindus.
4. S. A. Dange does not seem to be correct in stating : "The point is that *Maharastri* whose existence can be traced back as a dialect, to pre-Buddhist period (sixth century B. C.) whose grammar was written down by 200 B C., which was accepted and used as a state language by the Satavahans, became the Marathi language through centuries of development." (Notes on Medieval Marathi Literature —*Indian Literature* No. 2 of 1952)

   In this connection Woolner observes in *Introduction to Prakrits* : "For he (Vararuchi) seems to use the term not as a proper noun but as a laudatory or descriptive expression, meaning the Prakrit of the great kingdom (i. e. of the famed country of the Doab and Rajputana) and therefore the principal Prakrit..... At all events, whatever interpretation may be given to the term, there can be no doubt that, as a matter of fact, the dialect so called is Western Hindi and has no one point in common with Marathi, in which the latter differs from Western Hindi (or W. Gaudian generally).

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of compositions, Mahārāstrī for poetry and Śaurasenī for prose.[1] The dialectal miscegenation in the Middle Prākrits and the large varieties of each one of them, itself proves that these were not colloquial speeches.[2] Their artificial nature is also borne out by the mixing up of Sanskrit grammatical forms with them.

The third group of Prākrits, the Apabhraṁśas, is believed to be linguistically a stage in the development of the Indo-Aryan language which intervened between secondary Middle Indo-Aryan and the New Indo-Aryan. The Aryan speeches are supposed to have gone through this between the sixth and twelfth centuries A. D. The term Apabhraṁśa is used here as the name of a literary dialect in which poetic works were composed between 500 A. D. and 1200 A. D. and which was regarded as Apabhraṁśa by the authors themselves and by the Prākrit grammarians. There were, however, many varieties of the Apabhraṁśa language and Markanday calls his chief Apabhraṁśa as *Nagarapabhraṁśa*. He expressly counts it with Mahārāstrī and Śaurasenī, the Prākrits of Western India referred to above.

The view that modern languages of Northern India descended from Apabhraṁśas was first put forward by G.A. Grierson, who, in the Introductory Volume to the *Linguistic Survey of India* proposed a hypothetical Apabhraṁśa as preceding each New Indo-Aryan dialect. This assumption, though universally followed by subsequent writers on the subject, is unsupported by documentary evidence discovered so far. Few writers have cared to discuss how Apabhraṁśa which was referred to as a language of the Ābhīras by early grammarians came later to be used by Jaina writers in Gujarat, Rajasthan and South India for the composition of literary works.

A chronological and regional study of the Apabhraṁśa literature in its space-time context would bear out how erroneous it is to trace the ancestry of modern Northern Indian languages to any Apabhraṁśa language spoken in the whole or major parts of North India. The Apabhraṁśas did fully reflect the considerable changes which had taken place by the second half of the first millennium A.D. in the various spoken languages of the people. The term Apabhraṁśa was, however, merely a common name for the several non-colloquial languages which arose as a result of the mixing up of the languages of Ābhīras and related tribes with those of the people they came to rule over in Northern, Western and Central India during that period.

It is in Bharata's *Nāṭyaśāstra* (330 A. D.) that we come across the first real reference to Apabhraṁśa where it is mentioned

1. Prabhatchandra Chakravarti : Linguistic Speculations of the Hindus.
2. Cf. footnote 2 on page 26.

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as *vibhrasta*, distinct from Sanskrit and Dési and as the "dialect of the Ābhīras." Bharata assigns to Apabhraṁśa the position of a barbarous language spoken by the nomad people who rear cattle, sheep, horses and camels (Bh. 17, 47, 48, 55). Three centuries later Apabhraṁśa attains the status of a literary language and Bhāmaha regards Apabhraṁśa as the name of a dialect of poetry (Kavyalankara 1 16, 26). This literary status of Apabhraṁśa is confirmed by the pride in the ability of composing in Apabhraṁśa found in the copper plates of Dhārasena II of Valābhi in Kathiawar (600 A.D.). Kāṇada's recognition of Apabhraṁśa in his Prākrit grammar points to the same conclusion. In the 9th century Rudrata regarded Apabhraṁśa as a generic term for provincial dialects which were many in number and in the 10th century Rajasekhra described Apabhraṁśa as a literary language equal in status to Sanskrit and Prākrit. In the 11th century Puruśottama, an 'eastern' Buddhist Prākrit grammarian, regarded Apabhraṁśa as the speech of the elité – śiṣṭās – and asks us to refer to the usage of the cultured people for the characteristics of Apabhraṁśa. Another commentator Simhadeva in his commentary on Vagbhat's *Vagbhatalankara* locates these Apabhraṁśa dialects in the Dravidian provinces.[1]

The above changes in the nature and status of Apabhraṁśa cease to be confusing if we study its growth and development in relation to the history of the Ābhīras. According to *Mahābhārata*, where we find the earliest reference to the Ābhīras, these tribes were living in the Panjab. Near about the beginning of the Christian era, they migrated to Gujarat, Kathiawar and the neighbouring areas under the pressure of fresh waves of invaders from the north-west. This is confirmed by minor edict of 181 A.D. found in Kathiawar which contains a reference to Ābhīra commander Ruderbhuti. An inscription at Nasik of 300 A. D. makes a mention of the Ābhīra king Ishwarsen. From an inscription on Samuder Gupta's iron pillar at Allahabad, it appears that Ābhīras had by then come to dominate over Malwa, Rajasthan and had spread as far as Jhansi. Some of these tribes seem to have later reached further east and south. Ahirora in Mirzapur got its name from Ābhīras and so also the area from Tapti to Devgarh. There were settlements of Ābhīras in Khandesh, where they seem to have set up several clan-guilds. In course of time Śakas and Gurjaras seem to have got mixed up with the Ābhīras. Hūṇas too later got absorbed into them, after they had dispersed the earlier tribes of Rajasthan and settled in their places. These tribes provided some of the strongest dynasties of the middle ages and most of the present Rājput clans seem to have arisen from them. Finding the Hindu society frozen into

1. Cf. G. V. Tagore : Historical Grammar of Apabhraṁśa.

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an impregnable caste system and failing to get a place in it, these tribes joined the Jain religion and their courts became the patrons of Jain saints and of the Jain men of letters. When after the 7th century these feudal principalities grew in importance and influence their court languages, generally born out of the mixture of the Ābhīra and Gurjara dialects with the local tongues, also developed into literary languages.

These Apabhraṁśas received a further fillip when the Gurjara-Pratihāra kingdom under Mihira Bhoja and Mahendrapala revived the glory of the Harśa and Gupta empires. Even though the capital of their empire had shifted to Kanauj, the language of their courts continued to retain Gujarati and Rajasthani elements. Most of the Apabhraṁśa works which have so far come to light are in this 'Jain-Gurjar Apabhraṁśa'. Since Grierson traced the origin of Modern Hindi to the splitting up of Sauraseni Apabhraṁśa, scores of Apabhraṁśa works have been traced ; and hardly a single one of them can be said to be in a language which can be described as the earlier form of Khaṛī Bōlī Hindi. In this connection Sri Shiv Prasad Singh observes : "As a result of the coming into light of a large number of works in the Apabhraṁśas, a lost link has become available in the study of the New Indo-Aryan languages, but unfortunately this immense material is of little use from the point of view of the study of Hindi. It is not that these do not provide any assistance in understanding the development of the Hindi language. It is so because there is not a single work among these which can be regarded as the earlier form of Hindi."[1] The only Apabhraṁśa work so far traced which has any connection with any 'dialect' of Western Hindi is 'Prākrit Painglām' which has old Braj elements.[2] The oldest available 'Hindi' Ramayana of the period, the one by Chōmuh Sāyanbhū is in Old Avadhi, if it can be ascribed to any single language.

Khaṛi Bōlī in its older form did exist during those times side by side with other languages and dialects. If no work in the 'Apabhraṁśa form' of Khaṛi Bolī is available, it is because Khaṛi Bōli was not during that period the court language of any kingdom. This also would show conclusively that Apharaṁśas were not earlier forms of the current spoken languages but were merely class-languages which arose at the various courts. Delhi and the neighbouring areas had their own kingdom under the Tomars only for a short time in the twelfth century and the inscription in the Palam Baoli (1280 A. D.) which refers to Tomars and to the

1. Shiv Prasad Singh: Old Braj Elements in Prakrit Painglam: Kalpana, Hyderabad, September, 1955.
2. Ibid.

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reign of later 'Saka kings' Sahavadina (Shaha-buddin), Khuduvadina (Qutab-uddin) and Asamasadina (Shams-ud-Din) is more akin to old Bhangru (Haryanvi of Gurgaon) than to old Khaṛi Bōlī.

Even when the Abhira and Gurjara principalities[1] suffered a decline, the trading communities continued to nourish Apabhraṁśas which Hemchandra and others distinguished from the spoken languages. The mercantile communities in the South and Central India had been patronizing the Jain religion all these centuries. Trading activities, less dislocated in these regions than in North India, increased markedly with the return of stability and improved agriculture and crafts. Vijianagara was at that time described by Paes as more populous than Rome and contained 100,000 houses. Merchant corporations had by then acquired importance in Deccan also. The increase in the influence of these merchant communities further helped the Jain-Gurjara Apabhraṁśa to flower into the great literary language of the Digāmber Jains and into a speech of *Śiṣṭas*.

There is no doubt that the Apabhraṁśa literature. the published or unpublished records of which are available today, shares at least in essentials the main features of the languages spoken during those times, but it is equally incontestable that these Apabhraṁśas were not the actual spoken languages of the people and were like the earlier Prākrits artificial languages or class-jargons. Unless the term Apabhraṁśa is applied, as it is sometimes done, to the tertiary stage of the Middle Indo-Aryan language, the records of which are not available today, it cannot be said that modern Indian languages have come into existence as a result of the splitting up of these literary languages. Though, undoubtedly, reflecting the colloquial speeches of those times, these non-colloquial class-languages could not have given birth to the spoken languages of later times.

The common people are the great force that creates all the material and spiritual wealth. They are unsurpassed in creative genius and are the real authors of literary and cultural works, above all of languages in which this heritage is enshrined like a pearl in a shell. They nurtured the perennial stream of the living speech with countless processes and stages of development going on continually. While the artificial languages drawn out of this mainstream could be divided into three or more clear-cut stages, it would be impossible to similarly divide the living languages which, though always changing, are never different.

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1. Recent excavations near Kannauj by the Archaeological Department have unearthed numerous Jain antiquities all belonging to the period of the Gurjara-Pratihāra dynasty.

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Kabir said a few centuries later that Sanskrit is like stagnant well-water and spoken languages are like a flowing stream. It is from these spoken languages, still limited to tribes and nascent nationalities, which had always flowed on in their beds, self-sustained, self-moving and apart that we should trace the ancestry of modern Indian languages and not from the artificial literary languages which were as parasitic in their growth as were the classes which created them.

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CHAPTER FOUR

MATERIAL AND SPIRITUAL CONDITIONS ON THE EVE OF THE EARLY HINDI PERIOD

After the Apabhraṁśa languages we come to a period when modern Indian languages are supposed to have had their beginning. Hindi is generally believed to have come into existence during this period along with Panjabi, Gujarati, Rajasthani, etc., as a result of the splitting up of Saurasenī Apabhraṁśa. No reason is generally given for the sudden appearance of Early Hindi during this period except that it is sometimes mentioned that the *bhakti kavya* of Early Hindi arose under the impact of Islam on India. The great humanistic movement popularly called *bhakti* is supposed to have come, as described by Grierson, like "a flash of lightning" over the darkness of Indian mind and thought. Some have merely emphasized the fact that the *bhakti* movement came to North from the South without giving any reason for it. It has not been generally realised that this movement marked the confluence of two streams of Indian thought which had been running parallel for almost a millennium.

The non-colloquial nature of the Apabhraṁśas and Prākrits has already been discussed above and it has been explained that the common colloquial speeches of the great mass of unlettered people did not grow out of difficult artificial languages which their progenitors indisputably could not know and did not speak. We have seen that side by side with the rise and disappearance of several artificial languages or class-jargons, the colloquial speeches of today have continued to live on the lips of the people. During that time the gradual process of simplification of the colloquial languages had gone on uninterruptedly, along with the increasing simplification of the processes of labour in several departments of life. The slow reduction of inflexion and the imperceptible progress all the time from synthesis to analysis had no doubt reached a stage in the various languages of tribes and nascent nationalities when their distance from our present languages was not much. Many of the complex changes and developments, adoptions and adaptations which have contributed to the making of our languages had been mainly, if not wholly, achieved by that time and these had to a large extent acquired that richness of inflexion which enables us today to capture the whole territory

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of emphasis and suggestions which were difficult for our ancestors. The emergence of modern Indian languages had, however, yet to await the growth of mercantile economy, large-scale trade between tribes and nationalities and the development of a 'national market' before the colloquial speeches of those times could grow and coalesce into 'national' languages of today.

It is, therefore, necessary, to study the material and spiritual conditions on the eve of the Early Hindi period before we can correctly appraise the nature of the literary languages of that period; whether they marked the beginning of Modern Hindi language or were merely non-colloquial languages like those discussed earlier.

Indian culture did not perish under the onslaught of Islam as did that of Iran. It tended to withdraw itself more and more into the closed circle of its orthodox traditions. The Muslims did not have any fertilizing effect on the society in India as they did on that of Europe by transmitting the scientific knowledge of those times through their occupation of Spain. The battle between the various classes in India had been going on ceaselessly, though only a scanty record of it is available in the literature of various non-Hindu and Hindu creeds and sects. The Muslims, by striking a death-blow to the already waning influence of kṣatriyas, contributed largely to increase in the authority and personal power of brāhmiṇs over the Hindu masses. This lead to the ever-widening and more rigid application of caste restrictions and to the general acceptance by the entire non-Muslim Indian society of the jurisdiction of the brāhmiṇs.

It is wrong to think that before the Muslims came to India the entire population of this sub-continent professed Hindu religion. It can be said with a great measure of certainty on the basis of literature that has come down to us that a great number of the people of India, if not a majority of them, did not in the first millennium A. D. believe in what is now called Hinduism.[1]

The feudal reordering of society tends to make useful sciences unnecessary. In India this was accompanied by a complete ossification of scientific thinking resulting from the superstructure which grew out of the peculiar nature of our feudal society, some defects of which have been mentioned in the previous chapter. One element of the superstructure which profoundly affected the basis was the growth of the complex social structure of caste system, which became increasingly rigid and unalterable. It did not actually originate from the *varṇas*

1. Prof. Hopkins states in 'Religions of India': "Brahminism has always been an island in a sea. Even in the Brahmanic age there is evidence to show that it was the isolated belief of a comparatively small group of minds."

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of the epoch of slavery but arose out of tribal affiliations and professional associations which got continually elaborated in the beginning of the Christian era by the development of new crafts and through the introduction of new racial groups.[1] This process got accelerated by the large number of incoming tribes during those centuries.

The second element was the development of the theory of transmigration of soul. It went a long way in meeting the spiritual needs of a system, which offered nothing except perpetual slavery and utter hopelessness to the exploited sections of the society, by holding out promises even to the most exploited and the most wretched of human beings. The Buddhist theory of Nirvāṇa—a state neither of being nor annihilation—or the traditional hell of the Muslims and the Christians were hardly enough to meet the needs of the new social order in India. By seeking to make exploitation and the social misery resulting therefrom acceptable as pre-destined and inevitable, without the need for much coercion, the new superstructure greatly lessened and deformed class-struggle, thereby imparting a stagnancy and an unchangeability to the system.

This superstructure also had, as its necessary part, the Six Systems of Salvation – *Nyāya, Vaiseṣika, Sāṅkhya, Yoga, Mīmāṁsā* and *Vedānta.* The first two *Nyāya* ("Analysis") and *Vaiseṣika* ("the School of Individual Characteristics") which were complementary to each other, were rather schools of logic and epistemology and had some elements of scientific thinking. However, by the second and third century, when Patāṇjali wrote his *Yogasūtras,* these systems were fast on the wane and later virtually merged into a single school. In the early Middle Ages, when the ascetic temper prevailed, the third and fourth systems—the *Sāṅkhya* and *Yoga*—became the dominant cultural force, the latter more than the former, because it strove for greater ascetic aloofness and more of 'conquest by flight' over the evils of new system. Subsequently, as agriculture and urban life became prosperous, religious opinion began to shape itself into a new form. It consisted in taking for granted and ignoring the social evils, which had by then become somewhat less appalling. This brought to the fore the fifth and sixth Systems of Salvation— *Mīmāṁsa* and *Uttara Mīmāṁsa* or *Vedānta.* Hindu Philosophy or the Six System of Salvation had evidently no room for another form of religious opinion which developed later—that of protest against some unbearable evils and of throwing oneself into agitation for some particular reforms. This later form of religious opinion, much of which largely contributed

1. This is evidenced by craftswise summary of caste groups given in *Ethnography (Castes and Tribes)* by Sir Athelstane Baines—Strassburg—1913.

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to the *nirgun bhakti* movement, had, therefore, to draw, not only in content but also in form, on the various non-Hindu beliefs and forms of religious opinion which were current side by side with the Six Systems of Hindu Philosophy referred to above.

The religious opinions, both inside and outside the loose system of beliefs which later began to be described as Hinduism, were divided into *Āstikā* and *Nāstikā*. The former were split into Vedic and non-Vedic and the latter included Buddhists, Jains, Ājivakas and scores of other sects which were dominant intellectual forces till the middle of the first millennium A.D. The Vedic school had six Systems referred to above. The Vedānta finally acquired the greatest popularity amongst these six and had several mutually contradictory schools—*Advāitavād, Dvāitavād, Vaṣiṣtadvāitavad, Śudhadvāitavād,* etc. The different meanings these schools gave to the Vedic scriptures later gave birth to *Śaiva, Śākta, Pāshupata, Ganāpatya, Saur* and scores of similar sects; each one of these had *Bhāshyas* of its own, on either Upaniṣads, the Brahm-sūtra or the Gita and sometimes on all the three. Shankracharya (788 ? to 820 A. D.) who established the glory of Vedic philosophy was a Tamil or a Malabar Śaivite and he regarded most of the above sects as non-Vedic.

The non-Vedic *Āstikas* which Manu described as *Nastikas* also seem to have existed in several schools, though the records of only a few of these are now available. Amongst these *Pāñcharatra* sects have left behind an extensive literature. Their *granthas* have been mentioned as 108 in number and there seems to have been an almost equal number of *Saṇhitas,* though only a few of these are yet available in print. There is reference to other extensive literature by these sects, much of which seems to have been lost. Following the tradition of *Bhāgavatās* they gave a cosmological basis to the various myths of *Vasudeva-Krishna.* This provided inspiration for a great devotional movement. In the South India, where urban economy had grown undisturbed, records are available from the seventh to the eleventh century, of an ever-increasing number of devotional singers who, enraptured with *bhakti,* used to sing *bhajanās* from one temple to the other. The Ramayana, the Mahabharta and the Purānas exercised greater influence on these *bhajanās* than the *Saṇhitas* though these devotees were both *Vaiṣnavites* and *Śaivites.* This movement gave South India ten *Ālawar* saints and their literature. In the North, *Pāñcharātra Saṇhitās, Viṣṇu Purāna* and *Śri Bhāshya* acquired great popularity amongst the Hindus and Muthra grew into a powerful centre of this movement—trade and trading communities having by then shifted to Kanya-kubj (Kannauj) the neighbouring town on Ganges—a river more suited to riverain trade. So powerful was the lure of Muthra

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that saints as eminent as Ramanujam (1017-1137 A.D.) left their sacred temples and came to live there. This movement was the direct predecessor of the *sagun bhakti* which at its apex produced Sur and Tulsi.

The above forms of Vedic and non-Vedic religious opinions though evolved to serve the privileged minority did not, however, remain unaffected by the repeated onslaughts of popular beliefs. As the uprush of mass-forces again and again gathered volcanic proportions and as new phases of class-struggle acquired cyclonic intensity after their inevitable dissipation, the beliefs of the ruling class underwent a sea-change. The kaleidoscopic culture-pattern of Hinduism thus resulted from a fierce class struggle which has ceaselessly raged within Indian society and it is the common people who have largely determined the present character of Hinduism though it generally continues to be used against them. The ten *avatāras* of the Vaisnāva cult show how radically the common beliefs transformed Hindu religion in the early Middle Ages. Later the *Krishna* cult developed as synthesis of several heroes from many ages and many parts of India. Emerging as a banal pastoralism and a luxuriant eroticism, which too was a form of protest during those times,[1] it grew into the cults of child-god *Bala-Gopala* and *Rādhika* in the later half of the first millennium A.D. The common people used these as symbols of protest just as the child-Christ and Mary became in Europe the symbols of "the whole rebellion of man against fate; the whole protest against divine law; the whole contempt of man for human law as its outcome; the whole unutterable fury of human nature beating itself against the walls of its prison house."[2] The people continued to re-shape old forms of protest taken over by the privileged minority and evolved new ones, drawing all the time on the myths and rituals of their folk tradition. The greater the oppression, the more dynamic became the uprush of popular beliefs so much so the ruling class was again and again constrained to compromise and to assimilate those beliefs. "It is this process of revolt and assimilation which accounts for the exceptional complexity of Hindu mythology with its 30,000,000 so-called gods and

1. Bishnu Dey : "There was very little scope for freedom in those days and little growth of consciousness. The only two ways were the sophistication of sex and the tendency to rally obstinately behind the unorthodox gods and goddesses—facts which we still find true in the more remote villages. Let us call this mentality for convenience, Humanism, within the medieval world and then we explain the way the people had their own compensation rather than compromises"; 'Us', National Book Agency, Calcutta, 1943.

2. Henry Adams : quoted from *Time, the Refreshing River* by Joseph Needham.

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goddesses. First rejected, later tolerated and finally assimilated, these gods and goddesses together with innumerable pre-Aryan rituals and customs...survive as evidence of the way in which the popular pre-Aryan imagination has triumphed insidiously over the orthodox mind."[1]

The third stream of religious opinion in the beginning *Nastika* and anti-Vedic flowed on in full tide till the coming of Muslims. Scores of non-Hindu sects and creeds had then, per force, either to reconcile themselves to some position in Hindu social order or slide into Islam. There were many such social groups till the beginning of this century, which had Muslim names but were continuing to adhere to their earlier beliefs and practices. The Census Reports have, decade after decade, recorded Muslim *Yogis* and where in Bengal and Bihar these Muslims were not recorded as *Yogis*, their caste has been mentioned as '*Joga*'. This phenomenon must have been quite prevalent during the times of Kabir. No explanation is, therefore, really necessary for Kabir having a Muslim name while following and preaching non-Muslim practices. We shall see later that these beliefs were also mainly non-Hindu in tradition. Scores of Muslim poets in Bengal have left behind *ultbansis*, the verse-form for which Kabir is so famous.[2] Mahapandit Rahul Sankrityayana[3] has pointed out that this tradition was inherited from *Sidhs*, *Nathpanthis* and *Sahjyanis* of the preceding centuries.

Throughout this period there were several sects and creeds which because of their non-Vedic or anti-Vedic nature were considered outside the fold of Hinduism. Though there is evidence of some *Nāstikā* sects which believed in Vedas, all non-Vedic sects were generally declared *Nāstika*. Manu described those who criticised the Vedas as *Nastika* and Kuluka Bhat in his commentary on Manu also regarded all those who did not believe in the other world as *Nastika*. Sri Krishana Dhurjat Misra mentions six sects as *Nastikas* (1) Chārvāka (2) Mādhyamik Buddhists (3) Yogāchar Buddhists (4) Sāutrantic Buddhists (5) Vaibhāshic Buddhists, and (6) Dighamber Jains.[4] This would show that the term *Nastika* was generally applied to those sections of society which did not believe in practices and precepts which later began to be associated with Hinduism. A study of the extant literature of that period would show that their number was very large. The complete literature of one Buddhist sect 'Sthāvirvad' has now become available. Its volume is three times

1. John Irwin : *Class Struggle in Indian History and Culture*—Modern Quarterly, London, New Series—Volume 1, No. 2, March 1946.
2. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi : Madyakaleen Dharam Sadhna.
3. Rahul Sankrityayana : *Hindi Kavyadhara.*
4. Quoted in *Madhyakaleen Dharam Sadhana.*

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that of the Mahābhārata. This would indicate how extensive must have been the literature of non-Hindu sects and creeds though most of it has now perished. Each one of these creeds *Kāpālika, Lāluka, Vāma, Bhairav, Ājivika, Digāmbara, Vājaryani, Sahjyani etc.* had sects within sects according to their interpretation of Yogic, Tantric, Śaive, Śakta or other beliefs.

At the end of the first millennium A. D. the Hindu society tended to become more and more rigid. With the coming of the Muslims, the entire Indian society had to contend against an altogether new force. Many of the non-Vedic sects sought to be absorbed into the Vedic system of beliefs. Similarly the non-Hindu sects tried to modify their beliefs in order to come nearer to Hindu society. After the eleventh and twelfth century A. D., there seems to have arisen a widespread urge among the non-Hindu sects to find some place in the Hindu social order. The *Vaṣṇavites, Śaivites* and *Śhaktas* who so far held non-Vedic beliefs found it quite easy to drift towards the Vedic *Vaṣṇavites, Śaivites* and *Śhaktas*. The *Nath* sect too became one of the rallying points of those non-Hindu groups and creeds which were resisting sliding into Islam but were unable to find any place in the Hindu society. Mention has been made in *Yogsampradaya Vishkriti* of a meeting of the *Vām-māragis* near the source of Trishul-Ganga about 90 miles east of Dhavalgiri, which Gorakhnath attended on invitation. The *Vām-māragis* could not accept all the conditions of Gorakhnath and failed to be accepted into his creed. There is another instance of a similar meeting at Gorakhbansi (near modern Calcutta) where all the *Śākta* worshippers of the goddess-Kali, are stated to have joined his fold. There are instances of sects completely changing their anti-Vedic beliefs or of giving them an altogether new interpretation so as to seek reconciliation with Hindu society. A *śloka* in *Hathyog-Pradipka* stating that beef should be eaten is followed by another explaining that here the word *go* means tongue and not cow and eating its flesh merely means the yogic practice of *Brāhmarandhera* requiring the pushing of one's tongue into the throat making its back completely touch the palate.

The sects which associated themselves with the *Nathpanth* or merged into it, generally maintained their old beliefs, modified to omit practices offensive to Hindu religion. It seems that during this period the worship of cow became the *sine qua non* of a sect's acceptance into the Hindu society.

Buddhism, however, continued to exercise much influence and to maintain its independent existence in the east of India even after the coming of Muslims. Mohamed Bakhtiar, the commander of Kutub-uddin, who invaded Bihar is reported to have destroyed

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the Buddhist Viharas and libraries at Nalanda and Udantpuri. Sarnath also seems to have perished at the hands of some vandals during the same period. Gorakhnath himself is stated to be a Buddhist in the beginning.[1] According to *Chaitanyacharitamrit*, when Bengali saint Chaitanyadeva (died 1533) went to South India, he had long discussions with Buddhist monks at Arcot. Reference is also available about one Rangalraj Raja who built a Buddhist temple at Gaya in 1450. After the Buddhist Sanghas had been destroyed *Niranjans*, *Sidhs*, *Dharampanthis* and similar semi-Buddhist sects continued to survive for a long time.

All these sects used the languages of the people or some mixture of them for their literary purposes and metres too were borrowed from the folk heritage. The *dohas*, *padas*, *chaupais* and *ultbansis* of the *Nathpanthis* and their unorthodox content provided the main inspiration for the *nirgun bhakti* movement. Even their devotion to the *guru* instead of some diety, for attaining the *Sat-Guru*—the True One, through *Sat Nam*—the True Name—was borrowed from the *Naths* and *Sidhs*, though interpreted differently by different *nirgun* saints. The synthesis of non-Hindu beliefs with some of the Hindu ones provided the main spiritual content of this movement.

Trade was fast emerging from the set-back it had suffered in Northern India as a result of the Muslim invasions. Towns which were later to play a vital part in the growth of mercantile economy and in bringing the various tribes and nationalities into intimate contact with one another, had again begun to reappear after their destruction at the hands of Mahmud Gaznavi, Timur and others. In the whole territory from Kandhar to Calcutta and from Himalayas southwards to Kutch, there is hardly mention of two dozen towns of any size.[2] Only a millennium earlier the whole of Northern India was full of towns and centres of industry. Magasthenes referring to the towns during the Mauryan period mentioned "that the number is so great that it cannot be stated with precision." Earlier Strato, the geographer of Alexander's campaign affirmed that in the territory between Jhelum and Beas there were as many as 500 towns, which account is corroborated by Pāṇini's *Aṣtadhyāyi*.[3]

The growth of feudalism reduced these towns in number and importance but they suffered mainly at the hands of invaders from the north-west. Al-Beruni referring to Mahmud's seventeen invasions during the eleventh century stated : "Mahmud utterly ruined the prosperity of the country and performed those

1. Cf. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi : *Madhyakaleen Dharam Sadhna.*
2. Cf. Al-Beruni—*Kitab-ul-Hind.*
3. Cf, Vasudev Saran Aggarwala : India as known to Pāṇini.

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wonderful exploits by which the Hindus became like atoms of dust scattered in all the directions and like a tale of old in the mouths of the people." Timur two centuries later marched to Delhi similarly leaving behind heaps of corpses and burning towns and villages. Over a lakh of persons were killed by him at Delhi alone and the city was looted and ransacked continuously for five days. Guru Nanak in his *Babar Bani* mentioned how with the coming of Babar, "women became widows and men shelterless." He himself was put in prison by his army. The repeated destruction of towns was calamitous, more so, because it was combined with decay or uprooting of governmental organisations which alone could maintain the irrigation systems and keep the ravages of faulty tropical agriculture in check. A higher form of feudalism could emerge only on the basis of abundant, fertile and well-worked land. In Northern India agriculture regressed quite often. This is indicated by the cheapness and the large number of slaves, during this period – slavery was almost unknown during feudalism in Europe. Under Firoz Tugluk a slave would cost 8 tankas while a goat would cost as much as three. He encouraged the nobles of the realm to send slaves as annual tribute, for which a corresponding remission was made to them from the treasury. In Delhi alone their number rose from 50,000 under Ala-ud-Din, to 2,00,000 under Firoze. About 12,000 of these were craftsmen and masons. Many of these slaves worked in royal factories for the manufacture of all kinds of goods.[1]

During this period useful sciences made little progress. Unlike the alchemy of Europe, Indian *rasayana*, generally called *sidh-rasayana*, was purely magical as would appear from Al-Beruni's description.[2] There was no indication of feudal society moving to a higher stage where mercantile economy could begin to lessen the rigidity of feudal life. Only architecture could make significant advance under these circumstances and India had some of the finest masons in the world at that time. Amir Khusro proudly claimed that the masons and stone cutters of Delhi were superior to their fellow craftsmen of the Muslim world. Timur carried thousands of masons and artisans to Samarkand. This development of architecture was, however, merely a technical achievement and the result of discovering a series of solutions to practical difficulties. It did not bring about any advance in scientific knowledge—the theory of vault etc., was a later discovery.

The *Bhakti* movement arose in an era when money economy in India, particularly in the north was in its early stages and

1. Mohd. Ashraf : Life and Condition of the People of Hindustan.
2. Cf. Kitab-ul-Hind.

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still rural in nature. Built around self-sufficient village communities as this economy was, production was primarily for local consumption. Industry and trade were confined to handicrafts based primarily upon the exploitation of agricultural produce. Even the few large-scale industries which were carried on in a small number of localized areas, situated as a rule on the banks of rivers, showed the high level of specialization that could be achieved by generations of skilful effort, rather than any advance in science or technology. Methods of agriculture and transport had hardly made any advance during the preceding centuries. The ordinary villager had continued to plough with the shallow wooden plough and travel in the slow-moving bullock cart. The broad rivers were unbridged and the countryside was wilder and more thickly-forested than it is today. Herds of wild elephants, tigers etc. now extinct in the northern plains roamed about throughout the length and breadth of the land, increasing further the isolation of tribal communities and newly-rising nationalities. Development of trade and money-commodity relations were as much thwarted by lack of sufficient surplus in agricultural produce as by hazards and the slowness of transport. It, therefore, does not seem to be possible that the languages of tribes and nationalities could have coalesced into national languages during this period. This required the development of mercantile economy, the growth of mutually-linked, if not unified, markets over wide areas and the emergence of centralized mercantile or semi-mercantile states that could promote this and reverse the process of feudal isolation. The emergence of such conditions came about under the Mughals when the mixing up of the languages, tribes and nationalities took a final shape. Their extent and nature will be examined in a subsequent chapter.

The above would show that the belief almost universally held that Modern Hindi and some other languages of Northern India had their birth in the beginning of this millennium is not scientifically tenable. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji states categorically that "seven centuries were taken in the evolution of Hindustani—roughly from 1100 to 1800 A.D"[1] Dr. Sampurnanand too believes that the "the Hindi of today is the Hindi that has evolved down the centuries from the various Prakrits which began to take literary shape in Northern India."[2] Agreeing completely with the above, Mr. Sajaad Zaheer traces Hindustani to "the Apabhraṁśa form of Prakrit language prevalent in Northern and Central India at the time of the Turkish invasion of India in the 11th century A. D."[3]

1. S. K. Chatterji : Indo-Aryan and Hindi.
2. Cf. Speech reported in daily Statesman, New Delhi, March 28, 1951.
3. Sajaad Zaheer ; Problem of Urdu-Hindi-Hindustani, Marxist Miscellany Vol. 4 ; Peoples Publishing House, Bombay.

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The mere presence in Apabhraṁśas of grammatical forms akin to Modern Hindi does not by itself show that the latter originated from the former. The breaking down of inflexion and their replacement by post-positions as in modern languages are likely to have made their appearance even before the Apabhraṁśas flowered as literary languages. The Apabhraṁśas had necessarily to borrow some of these grammatical forms just as they adopted some dead ones also. Later the *bhakti kavya* and the *Rasos* too drew upon these grammatical forms of the colloquial speeches of those times, the former more than the latter, because it was nearer the people. These colloquial speeches, however, still existed as the languages of tribes and nascent nationalities. It was not during the Early Hindi period but in the Middle Hindi period that the colloquial speeches merged and grew into the languages we have today.

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CHAPTER FIVE

THE ARTIFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THE EARLY HINDI PERIOD

The history of Hindi has been divided into three periods—Early Hindi, Middle Hindi and High or Modern Hindi. Not only a rigid relationship is traced between these three periods and the large number of 'styles' which these embrace, but often all these are treated as one and the same language. From the language of the *Sidhs* in the 11th century A.D. to the highly Sanskritized Modern Hindi, claim is laid to all that has been written in the various parts of North India during these eight or nine centuries without feeling the slightest need to establish any linguistic unity among them.

Early Hindi, as the first of the three periods of Hindi language and literature is called, is not a uniform language. It exists in several varieties, some of which are completely unconnected with the others. These are generally grouped into two 'forms' or styles, *dingal* of the *Virgadha-Kal* and *bhakti-kavya* of the *Bhakti-Kal*. Each one of these two styles is quite separate from and unconnected with the other and is in itself a loose common name for several varieties and shades.

The *dińgal* is the style in which heroic ballads of those times were written by bards and minstrels of Rajasthan who either lived in the court of some Rajput prince or wandered from one feudal principality to the other, singing their ballads consisting of time-worn court tales of chivalry of the knights of yore slaying enemies by thousands and also newly-composed songs in praise of the prince they were then attending on. *Chāran* was the name of the tribe of these bards or *bhāts* as they were called and the heroic ballads sung by them were called *chāran-kavya*. The name *dińgal* meaning low or deformed verses was given to this poetry as opposed to *piṅgal* meaning verses which followed the classical rules of prosody.

The ballads of minstrels during the feudal times were generally of two types. One class of these minstrels catered to the spiritual needs of the common people. Such a minstrel was their entertainer and source of information. Liked and welcomed by the common people and distrusted and frowned upon by the

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temporal and religious authorities, he sang of the many-sided experiences of the peoples' common life. Drawing upon their own songs of love and labour, he chiselled and polished them with the craftsmanship learnt through the effort of many generations. He was a jester who sometimes made them laugh over their oppression and at others angry against it. Bringing to a rich life those very imageries, metres and tunes which had been borrowed from their inexhaustible heritage of memories, he and his songs were a flesh of their flesh. This class of *diṅgal* or *chāran-kāvya* which was mainly in the colloquial speeches of the tribes or nationalities remains unnoticed and uncollected by the historians of Hindi. Some of its elements are surely yet available in the common literature of Rajasthan.

The minstrels of the other class were *bhāts* or bards who addressed their ballads to the service of the feudal chieftains and their retainers. Their language generally mixed and non-colloquial differed from court to court. The same heroic tales and ballads were changed to include words of the language and names of living and dead heroes of the clan, tribe or principality whose fortunes were on the rise. Wandering from court to court these bards had often to evolve a mixed language more or less intelligible at the various courts. Quite often when the fortunes of a barony rose its spoken language also got the upper hand and became the dominant element in the mixed language of the ballads sung by these bards.

In Germany there was the Chancery language of more or less the same period which was of a similarly mixed nature. The ancestry of modern German is not claimed to this Chancery language. It also differed from Alemannic, Frankish, Bavarian and Swabian, the languages of the feudal principalities which won prominence one after the other in the preceding centuries. It was an artificial language made up of the mixture of commonly understood words of all these languages with the minimum possible grammatical elements so as to keep out dialectal peculiarities. The *diṅgal* language of the *Rasos* was a similarly mixed language.

The greatest work of this *diṅgal* 'style' of Hindi which is also believed to be the earliest extant work of the Hindi language is Chanda Baradai's "Prithviraj Rasau". The artificial and mixed character of its language has been recognised by all scholars and historians of Hindi. In this connection, Dr. S. K. Chatterji significantly remarks : "As it is, the language of the *Rasau* is not a living dialect—it is not the spoken language of any period or province. It is an artificial literary dialect, with forms from a whole host of speeches covering a number of centu-

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ries and several thousands of square miles. The main elements are Western Apabhraṁśa, with Early Western Hindi and Rajasthani dialects, and Early Panjabi features here and there. A mixed dialect of this type became gradually current after 1200 A.D. in Rajput poetry and was known as Pingala or Pingal. But this mixed dialect of Rajput bardic poetry was a specialized speech —a class dialect, understood only by the initiated: it was not a language of the masses."[1] Almost all scholars on the subject have expressed their agreement with the above views. There is also a unanimity of opinion about its containing many interpolations of subsequent periods. Dr. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi believes that "the form in which it is available today is not original and has got enormously modified and tempered with."[2] Despite that, surprisingly enough, this language continues to be regarded as the earliest extant example of the Hindi language.

This mixing up of languages in the *Rasau* is not due to later interpolations, nor is there anything unusual in it. Another similar publication brought out by the Kashi Nagri Pracharni Sabha is *Parmal Raso* "a work similar in nature to Prithviraj Raso and having a similarly mixed language."[3]

In the feudal society, over and above the divided peasantry stood the greater landlord, the baron and sometimes the king. Similarly over and above the babel of dialects and colloquial speeches, the ruling feudal and priestly classes evolved an artificial super-tongue, so necessary for serving the interests of their class. Different historical and material circumstances gave birth to different languages in different countries. *Diṅgal* was one such language and no amount of effort can prove that it was the early stage of the Hindi of today.

The 'form' or style of Early Hindi variously called—*Hindvi, Sadh-bhasha, Sant-vani, Bhakti-kavya* etc.—is in fact not one uniform language but is a common term, loosely used, for several varieties and shades of the languages of Northern India during those times. This 'form' arose differently from *diṅgal,* covered a wider area and was nearer to the speeches of the people. This language of *bhakti* revival arose in the era of early mercantile economy when money-commodity relations had not yet become powerful enough to make appreciable breaches in the rigidity of feudal life, which in India was more ossified than elsewhere, due primarily to the incrustation of classes into castes. Only after a stable merchant community had come to birth with national as distinct from

1. S.K. Chatterji : Indo-Aryan and Hindi.
2. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi : *Hindi Sahitya ki Bhoomika.*
3. Ibid.

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local or sectional interests would the traders and merchants begin to move about freely and in large numbers from one linguistic area to the other. At that particular period in Indian history, the only persons who moved about from place to place in sufficient numbers were the pilgrims and *sadhus*. While moving about from one pilgrim centre to the other, the *sadhus* particularly had, per force, to evolve some sort of common vocabulary and terminology for discussions among themselves and also for preaching their beliefs. They often strove to compose their *bhajanas*, *dohas* etc., in a language intelligible to the largest group of communities among which they moved about. Sometimes like Guru Nanak they composed in several dialects or, as in the earlier part of *Japji*, wrote *bhajanas* using widely understood words and phrases only, doing away mostly with grammatical structure. However, a majority of them generally dropped the unintelligible elements of their own language or dialect and adopted familiar elements of others. Quite frequently they modified their songs to meet the needs of every area they visited and equally often this was done by their disciples in that area. In view of that there is not much substance in Sri Udhay Narain Tiwari's complaint that the songs of Kabir were rendered into Panjabi by the Sikh Guru while including them in the *Adi Granth*.[1] It is virtually impossible to say with certainty about any saint-poet of that period that he composed in the language which has come down to us.

It is not, therefore, surprising that Early Hindi exists in several varieties and styles and covers areas as far-flung as Panjab, Bihar and Maharashtra. It is also significant that the writings of those saints are claimed as much by the languages of the respective regions as by Hindi. The Sikh scripture, *Adi Granth*, gives the devotional songs of over a dozon of these saints and from these one can obtain some idea of how distinct and in many ways independent these varieties of Early Hindi are. The varied nature of these writings is also evidenced by the several *Bhagat-mals*—anthologies of saint-poets—prepared during those times.

Two of the greatest bhakti-poets were Kabir and Nanak and their languages, as these are available today, are also nearest to Khari Boli. The non-colloquial nature of these languages has generally been recognised. Sri Ram Chandra Shukla discussing the language of Kabir remarks : "The collection of Kabir's writings is known under the name *Bijak* and it has been divided into three parts—*Rameni*, *Śabad* and *Śakhi*.....Their

1. Uday Narain Tiwari : broadcast talk on "Bhojpuri" included in Hindi Ki Pradeshic Bashaen—Publications Division : Old Secretariat, Delhi.

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language is mixed. It contains a combination of Khari-boli. Avadhi, Purbi (Bihari) and many related dialects. Here and there elements of Braj-bhasha are also traceable but very few."[1] Incidentally, Kabir describes his mother-tongue as 'Purbi'. The mixed nature of the language of Guru Nanak's writings has already been referred to.

Mere etymological evidence can sometimes be misleading and the nearness of some of grammatical forms of the Early Hindi period to those available in our modern languages has tended to misguide Indian philologists into believing that the *bhakti-kavya* marks the beginning of the new period instead of being the last phase of the old one. The literary languages of the feudal period are prone to retain dead and semi-dead forms so much so that words in their Apabhraṁśa form are available even in the writings of Tulsi and Sur. Languages grow and change so slowly and over such a vast period of time that the forms of words and grammar akin to the modern languages possibly existed in the colloquial speeches even a few centuries prior to the Early Hindi Period. The presence of these forms in Early Hindi does not by itself prove that a common colloquial language for a territory as vast as the one now called Hindi or Hindustani area, had then begun to take shape. The non-colloquial languages have necessarily to borrow the grammatical forms of the colloquial speeches because they cannot have an independent grammatical system of their own.

The presence of Khari Bolī elements in these languages of the *Nirgun* saints can be understood only if we can appreciate the intimate link they had with the previous period. The Nirgun saints were the direct inheritors of the traditions of *Nathpanth*, the founder-saints of which sect were from an area where Khari Bolī and Eastern Panjabi were prevalent as colloquial speeches. In the *Mathas*, *Akharas* and *Asthanas* of *Nathpanth*, a mixed artificial language, the predominant elements of which were Khari Boli and Eastern Panjabi, began to be used by these saints and their followers for discussions and for mutual communication. As these *akharas* and *asthanas* spread from Khari Boli and neighbouring areas to other parts of India, this language began to vary from area to area but Khari Boli elements continued generally, to predominate and to provide the main grammatical stem.

In the Middle Ages all forms of ideology and struggle expressed themselves through religion. As all social and political movements had necessarily to appear in a theological frame-work,

1. Ram Chandra Shukla : Hindi Sahitya Ka Itihas, Indian Press, Allahabad.

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the masses also had to put forward their interests in a religious guise. Accordingly, religion not only found expression in forms which sanctioned oppression but also in those which protested against it. We have seen earlier that, throughout, some religious forms continued to be used as a weapon of struggle against oppression and against all those religious opinions which sanctioned it. In the early Middle Ages, the dominant form was renunciation and asceticism. In India the *Yogic* beliefs, which varied from raj-yoga to hath-yoga, formed as much a part of the Vedic system as that of the non-Hindu creeds, serving in one case the purpose of abject surrender to the system and in the other of protest against its injustices. The common people developed the latter form in their own unsophisticated way deriving its richness and vigour from the simple and rough-hewn beliefs and heritage of their own. Sometimes these yogic and hath-yogic beliefs acquired such a vigorous element of protest that anarchist sects like *Vam-maragis* and Tantrics went to the extent of preaching that "all that is *dharama* for brāhmins is *adharama* for us and all that is *adharama* for brāhmins is *dharama* for us." The forms of protest employed by these *Sāhjyanis, Vājaryanis, Mārmis, Kāpālakas, Chārvākas, Aghoras,* etc., were inherited by the *nirgun* saints. Their very conception of *nirgun* can be traced to the *nirgun Śiva* of *Kāpālakas* and others of the first millennium A. D. How intimate and unbroken this inheritance has been will be borne out by the fact that Kabir's *ultbansis* were adopted from *Nathpanthi Yogis, Sahjyanis* and *Vajaryanis,* not only in form but sometimes also in content. The *Nathpanthis, Sahjyanis* etc. in turn derived these from *Vibhashakas* and some other Buddhist sects of half a millennium earlier, who got this name because they made use of *vibhasha* or 'gibberish'. They were like a similar group of despised minstrels and "nameless vagabonds" in Europe who used a language called *trobar clus*—literally to compose obscurely.

The mixed languages of *nirgun* saints have their parallel in Europe and also in other parts of India. Referring to the language of the lyrics of the 'wandering scholars' of Europe during almost the same period, Hellen Waddell observes that to study it properly "demands a knowledge of five vernaculars at their thorniest transition—Provencal, Middle German, Italian, Old French, Anglo-Norman as well as Middle English."[1] She has also pointed out that "the loveliest of all rhymes was shaping itself in three languages to its last and absolute perfection", a phenomenon observed in India with some of the songs of Kabir and other *bhakti* poets. Similar languages were current in other parts of India during those times. *Padas* was the 'style', current in Bengal and Bihar among saint-poets. The *Sahjyanis*

1. Hellen Waddell : Wandering Scholars, Penguin Books, London.

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called their language *sandhya-bhasha* and those who have made a detailed study of this language have expressed the opinion that because of its mixed character the language could only be half-understood and half-guessed.

Many Sidh *ultabansis* etc., appear later under the names of *bhakti* poets with minor alterations made necessary by time, place and individual temperament. This language becomes still more unreliable for philological formulations as a result of verbal alterations by the followers of these saints, many of them writing not in their own names but in the name of the founder of the sect. Dr. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi has pointed out that Kabir and other *bhakti* saints not only borrowed the literary and metric traditions from *Nathpanthis*, *Sehjyanis*, etc., but "adopted word for word their couplets and dohas"[1] and also that "the same couplet would sometimes be ascribed to Kabir and at others to Gorakhnath, Dadu or Raidas."[2]

This confusion becomes worse confounded as a result of the general practice of lumping together all the *nirgun* and *sagun* saints from the 12th to the 16th century within the *bhakti* movement of the Early and Middle Hindi periods. Their writings do not have any uniform grammatical stem and are also very varied, as these inevitably reflect the changes in the fortunes of the various contending classes during those five momentous centuries. The three forms of religious opinion during the feudal period have already been mentioned—the first, of ascetic aloofness and of detesting or otherwise running away from social evils, the second of accepting them tamely but ignoring them and third of protesting against some or most of the social evils and of agitating for their reform. The second form of religious opinion, represented by *Pāncharātra*, *Bhagawata* and other sects had its best representative in Sur Das in the sixteenth century. The third form of opinion which existed mainly among non-Vedic and non-Hindu sects was inherited by Kabir and other *nirgun* saints. After Kabir another form of religious opinion acquired popularity. This fourth form was that of partly accepting and partly decrying, rather of both accepting and criticising social evils and believing them to constitute the squalid foundation on which the life of the spirit must arise. It had in Tulsi its best representative. This would show that even among the *sagun* saints, the writings were inspired by two different ideologies. It is not possible to understand the nature of the languages they wrote in and the contribution they made to the evolution of national languages in Northern India without properly appreciating these differences.

1. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi : *Hindi Sahitya ki Bhoomika*.
2. Ibid. Also Cf. Hazari Prasad Dwivedi : *Nath Sampradaya*.

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CHAPTER SIX

NATIONAL LANGUAGES OF THE MIDDLE HINDI PERIOD

The second style of Hindi called the "Middle Hindi," prevalent from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, is represented as a golden period of its literature. Unlike the Early Hindi period, where in many of the several varieties of mixed languages, one could trace the somewhat dominant position of Khari Bolī elements, the Middle Hindi period consists of literatures in many languages without any linguistic unity. These literatures consist mainly of *Riti Kal* (in Braj Bhasha and Bundeli), *Krishna-bhakti-dhara* (in Braj-Bhasha and Rajasthani) and *Ram-bhakti-dhara* (in Avadhi and Bhojpuri). These languages—Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, Rajasthani etc., are today regarded as 'dialects' of Hindi. National languages arose on the basis of the grammatical system of the language of one nationality or tribe and those of others forming the 'nation' concentrating or merging themselves into it. This grammatical system and the basic stock of words got continuously strengthened, enriched and extended and thus standard languages emerged over areas covering several dialects and smaller languages. In case of Hindi, however, it is put forward that the grammatical stem of Khari Boli which was acquired during the Early Hindi period was given up in favour of those of Braj Bhasha, Avadhi etc., in the Middle Hindi period. The phenomenon of a 'national' language acquiring a grammatical stem and later, instead of strengthening it, surrendering it for some centuries is unusual in linguistic history. No explanation is ever given for this by the historians of the Hindi language. The flowering of Avadhi, Braj Bhasha and other languages during this period would itself show that the earlier period, when Khari-Bolī-Hindi is believed to embrace all these areas, did not mark the beginning of any colloquial speech over such a vast area. Tulsi Dass called his language *bhasha* and meant only Avadhi by it. This was the period when these colloquial *bhashas* covering areas as large as Braj-bhoom, Avadh, Maithila, Magadha, Rajasthan, etc., tended to emerge out of the mixing up of dialects and smaller colloquial speeches of tribes, feudal principalities and nationalities.

All the spoken languages and dialects in the far flung parts of Northern, Central and Western India now called the Hindi

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area, could not grow into one colloquial language but could develop only on a smaller scale within regions which now constitute the *pradeshic bhashas* or regional languages of this area. Before the reasons for this can be explained, it appears necessary to discuss the factors, different in different countries, which bring about the evolution of national languages. The material and spiritual conditions existing in Northern India at that time will also have to be examined to find out the extent and the manner in which those factors exercised their influence in India.

It has been seen in the previous chapters that colloquial tribal languages have been indisputably there ever since these communities came to settle in their present territories. The languages spoken by the people did not, however, remain unchanged. Their growth, simplification and enrichment went on at varying paces side by side with the enrichment in quality, if not in quantity, of the material equipment of the society. Such material conditions did not, however, exist as could enable them to exhibit any tendency towards general unity. The type of feudalism we have had in this country is characterized by a stagnant condition of society. This does not mean that social life did not undergo convulsions or the modes of production remained absolutely changeless. Whenever new techniques raised the low productivity of forced peasant labour, the tribes and their languages tended to draw nearer but this process was often arrested or reversed by foreign invasions, immigrations and internecine feudal conflicts. Whenever tools became less efficient, languages also deteriorated correspondingly. Slow in the invention of new tools, because of the inherent defects in Indian feudalism, but very dexterous in the perfecting of old ones, the Indian people did continue to move slowly forward, less haltingly in areas which were not within the immediate reach of invaders. Though the internal conflict within that serf society never became intense enough to make any forward leap possible, the mixing up of tribes and clans into nationalities went on within areas which had some geographical and historical unity and within which community of psychological make up had come to exist. The effect of these internal integrative forces became evident in the feudal principalities which developed between the ninth and the twelfth century. The Candellas of Jeja Bhukti (Bundelkhand), Kalacuri principalities of Gorakhpur (Kehala), Chhota Nagpur (Dehala) and Chhatisgarh (Tummana), Kachhapaghatas (Kachhwahas) of Eastern Rajputana, Paramaras of Malva, Caulukyas of Anahila Pataka (Kathiawar), Cāhamānas (Chauhanas) of North-Western Rajputana, Guhillas of Southern Rajputana, Tomars of Hariana, Gahadavalas of Eastern Avadh, Palas of Southern Bihar, Senas

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of South-Western Bengal and other similar kingdoms[1] which arose during that period emphasize the fact that most of the ancient tribes mentioned in the Mahābhārata, the Puranas and the Buddhist works and by Pāṇini and Kalidasa had then begun to come together, forming nascent nationalities.[2]

The next stage in the development of languages i.e. the mixing up and concentration of languages of nationalities into national languages, could come about only when the small marts had merged into a single national market. This could happen only when the mercantile community developed a national as distinct from a local or sectional outlook, thereby ending feudal isolation and tearing asunder the rigidity of feudal life.

In India during the centuries which marked the establishment of the Mughal empire, the mercantile community acquired a new stability and vitality. The Lodhis had made the roads safer and better and Sher Shah reformed the monetary system. The importance which the trading community had begun to acquire by the time of Akbar is evidenced by the significant position which Todar Mal occupied at his court.

Earlier Muslim invaders came merely to loot and plunder. They did immense damage to productive resources. The fertilizing effect of the new inventions which they brought with them could be felt only after the Muslim Kingdoms firmly established themselves in India. The set-back which agriculture had received as a result of the neglect of irrigation and public works, consequent on periodic unstable governments, was made good by the building of tanks and wells by individuals which had now been enjoined as a religious duty on their part. The pulleys, springs and levers developed in the *Manjnik*,[3] (the mechanical apparatus used by the Muslim invaders, before the invention of gun powder, for storming forts) helped in improving the mechanism of irrigation and industry. The use of Persian wheel became wide-

1. Cf. H.C. Roy : The Dynastic History of Northern India—Early Medieval Period, Volumes 1 & 2.

2. S.A. Dange observes in *Notes on Medieval Marathi Literature* : "The birth of the elements of stable nationalities should be looked into between 600 B.C. and 200 B.C." (Indian Literature No. 2 of 1952). Referring to those times Rhys Davids, however, states : "The country was immense. Compared with its wide expanse, the tribes and clans were few ; often separated from one another by broad rivers and impenetrable forests, there must have been ample opportunity for independent growth." (Buddhist India).

3. Prof. Mahmud Khan Sherwani who has made a detailed study of this subject has failed to find any clear account of the mechanismof *Manjnik* among Muslim chroniclers (c.f. Prithvi Raj Raso—Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Urdu). There is, however, no doubt that *Manjnik* was similar to, though somewhat more elaborate than, the European catapult.

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spread. The horse-collar and the horse-shoe came to India and horses began to be used increasingly for transport. Roads linked the various marketing centres which developed fast as agricultural economy began to yield surpluses large enough to form the basis of handicrafts and of an industry based primarily upon the exploitation of agricultural produce. Thus the age-long isolation of the colloquial speeches had begun to grow less even before Sher Shah and Akbar.

Under Akbar we have what can be called an "empire of merchants and landlords." Akbar took an active interest in mercantile activities. V. A. Smith has emphasized that "Akbar himself was a trader and did not disdain to earn commercial profits."[1] The revenue and administrative system inherited from the Sur kings was improved. A uniform system of currency was introduced throughout the realm and mint was brought under royal control. Feudal relations received a severe set-back by Akbar's new system of making cash payments to his *mansabdars* instead of payments through allotments of jagirs.

Shahjahan monopolized trade in indigo and saltpetre. Nur Jahan dabbled in embroidered-cloth trade and her father and other courtiers and princes were also traders. Pieces of cotton cloth exported to England from Agra increased from 2,823 in 1638-39 to 23,550 in 1640-41. Agra, previously a centre of saltpetre, stone quarries and iron, developed into a great market of cotton trade. The population of Agra increased to six lakhs in 1640 A. D. after Akbar and Jehangir developed this town and the neighbouring Fatehpuri as their capital. It was perhaps the largest city in the world at that time.

The question now arises why national languages could during this period sprout only on a smaller scale and why the process of their mixing up did not include the whole of the territory now called Hindi region and also Panjab, Deccan and Gujarat which were then intimately linked with this area through trade. Even after the cotton trade with Britain and other countries shifted from Gujarat to Agra, it continued to be through the Gujarat ports. Lahore had developed into a great centre of horse trade and of a famous shawl industry. It was now on the trade route to Central and Western Asia, which previously passed through Multan or Sialkot. Thus it had developed into a city as prosperous and as popular as Agra ; Jehangir and Nur Jehan chose to have their mausoleums there and it was the home of powerful Mughal princes. It then had most intimate contacts with the trading centres of Agra and Delhi.

The mercantile economy, in the times of Akbar, was at a very much lower technical level than in Europe. European

1. V. A. Smith : Akbar, The Great Mughal,

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travellers during the Mughal period "refer to the badness of roads which were atrocious even by low Western standards of the time."[1] The rivers were broad and without bridges ; and "we have it on record that the Mughal armies found the forests of Orcha so thick that they had to undertake a special operation to clear the way."[2] The new prosperity did not last long and received a serious set-back soon after it came into its own. *Mansabdars* again became Jagirdars and to the feuds between the princes and the wars against the resurgent nationalities were added the attempts by these *Mansabdars* to acquire more and more power. Land revenue which was one-sixth of the produce before and under the early Muslim kings, became one-third under Akbar and one-half under the later Mughals. This became a dead weight on agriculture which suffered most from chronic wars and military marches. The *karkhanas* which were centres of prosperity during the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century deteriorated as tyrannical officials tried to have every thing at cheap rates and never paid for anything adequately. Village industries died out altogether and in many respects India went back to an economic level lower than the one it started with under Akbar. Bernier dwells at length upon the decline of arts and crafts and the unsettled condition of the country which was inimical to all trade and commerce. Referring to it Prof. J. N. Sarkar observes : "Thus ensued a great economic impoverishment of India—not only a decrease of the 'national stock' but also a rapid lowering of mechanical skill and standards of civilization—a disappearance of art and culture over wide tracts of the country."[3] The merchant had per force to conceal his wealth instead of investing it in commerce for fear of being deprived of it by the local governor or *faujdar*. As highways lost their security, large-scale commercial activities ceased altogether. Famines occurred frequently and their effect on trade was also disastrous. Indigo, one of the principal articles of export, became scarce. Price of cotton went up and that of gold fell.

Most of the technical achievements which effected the birth of capitalist relations out of the womb of Western European feudal society were absent in India. Uninterrupted growth of mercantile economy over several centuries, stimulated by an ever-rising technological level was necessary, before an advance could be made towards Renaissance and onwards to the Industrial Revolution. Despite that, the countries of Western Europe, formerly covered by Latin and having an area and population much less than Northern India, did not develop one common

1. A. L. Basham : The Wonder that was India. London, 1954.
2. K. M. Panikkar : Geographical Factors in Indian History.
3. J. N. Sarkar : History of Aurangzeb.

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language and one single nationhood, but over a dozen languages and nations.

The economic development in Europe took place in three stages—small commodity production depending mainly on handicrafts or peasant trades, capitalist manufacture and large-scale factory production. In India mercantile economy did not develop beyond the first stage and here also the growth of state-owned *karkhanas*, run through semi-slave labour, undermined the influence of trade guilds. It is wrong to say that India, during the Mughal period, developed a bourgeoisie either on a small or a national scale. Mughal absolutism left untouched the ancient relations which had become solidified into Indian feudalism *i. e.*, village self-sufficiency, caste system, virtual slavery of the lower castes, etc.

An equally far-reaching short-coming was that Mughal despotism was not national in character. Akbar, the most Indian of the Mughal rulers, introduced Persian as the language of administration.[1] Significantly enough, after his victory at Panipat he sent Hemu's head for display at Kabul. The Mughal state was not a national state like the ones which grew up in Western Europe, but multi-national somewhat like the Turkish Empire in Eastern Europe of more or less the same period, and based upon the merciless suppression of nationalities and nations living within it. Discussing the deadly effect this had on the growth of national languages. Prof. W. R. Lockwood states : "Byzantium fell in 1453, but the majority of the Greeks had been obliged to acknowledge the Ottoman overlord before this. Thus while Italy and France were evolving towards nationhood in the modern sense, Greece was languishing in Turkish captivity, her advance to nationhood effectively restrained by political subjugation."[2]

Another reason why a common language could not grow for the whole of the Hindi region was that factors which contributed to the evolution of national languages and nations in other countries did not operate here on a scale large enough for the purpose. London, Paris and other capital cities in Western Europe contributed towards the unification of smaller languages and dialects by sucking in a mass of people not only from their immediate environments but also from more remote districts. In these towns immigrants from different parts of the country got their dialects rubbed down in mutual intercourse with one

1. K. M. Panikkar : "The Moghul Emperors in India became the embodiment of Persian culture and celebrated Nauroz with traditional festivities and popularised Persian techniques in art" (Geographical Factors in Indian History).
2. Cf. "Language and the Rise of Nations"—Science and Society Vol. XVIII No. 3, Summer 1954.

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another. Consequently, the population of these great towns began to talk in a manner which one would not expect from its geographical situation. Otto Jesperson showed from the census of 1890 that a majority of the inhabitants of Copenhagen had not been born in or near Copenhagen.[1] These capital towns, therefore, acted as a crucible where the languages of nationalities and tribes historically, emotionally and psychologically moving towards a common national life, underwent concentration and fusion. Other contributory factors were political unity, common military service, popular religious and other festivals and dramas—the commonly understood German of the stage had even a name—*Buhneudeutch*. In Germany, as in some other countries where commercial prosperity came late, religion played a very important part. The language used by Luther was not the local dialect of a district. It was based upon the court and official languages of principal kingdoms of Central and Southern Germany made up of Swabian, Austrian and other dialectal elements. To this Bible of Luther, the upheavals of Reformation and political revolution gave a new fillip. Armed with the new art of printing it penetrated all parts of the land and all classes of the people. In Russia also, important part was played in the consolidation of Russian language and culture by the transfer of the seat of the Russian Metropolitan to Moscow.

In the heyday of commercial prosperity under the Mughals, Delhi was not their capital. No wonder that the most popular Indian language during the time of Akbar and Jehangir was not Khari-Boli-Hindi but Braj Bhāsha, the language of the neighbourhood of Agra.[2] The large population of Delhi under Akbar considered by Marx[3] as the largest city of the world at that time continued to dwindle from century to century as the city attracted fewer and fewer traders with the fading away of its short lived commercial prosperity under Akbar and Shahjehan. The city never recovered from the deadly blows it received at the hands of Nadir Shah (1739) and during the Mutiny (1857) so much so that on the eve of the Second World War in 1939, it was a small town with about two lakh inhabitants in the 'old city', speaking primarily a style of Khaṛi Bɔli nearer to Urdu than to Modern Hindi.

The belief that the language of the capital city by itself wipes out the languages of other areas superseding them and thus becoming a national language is erroneous. It is not support-

1. Otto Jesperson : "Fonetik."
2. S K, Chatterji states in Indo-Aryan and Hindi : "Akbar composed distichs in Braj-Bhākha, and if any Indo-Aryan language could be labelled as *Badshahi Boli* in Northern India, it was certainly Braj Bhakha."
3. Karl Marx : Chronological Notes on the History of India,

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ed by any evidence whatsoever. The peoples as tenacious as those living in India and with a culture as imperishable as theirs would never have allowed their languages to be wiped out without themselves suffering extinction. The single common language which gets formed in the crucible of capital cities is the result of the concentration of dialects around the stem provided by the grammatical system and the basic vocabulary of one or two of them. This language is the highest form to the making of which smaller languages and dialects as lower forms contribute their share. Delhi did not develop into a melting pot for such a fusion of languages of Northern India, with the result that Sur Das and Tulsi did not have any commonly evolved colloquial language for this whole area to serve as their medium. They had, therefore, to write in languages which did not possess any grammatical elements of Khari Boli. *Sur Sagar* and *Ram Charit Manas* could not, therefore, perform a function in the evolution of a common language for the whole of Northern India, as was done by Luther's Bible.

Another significant reason, which is likely to have prevented the languages of nationalities and tribes living in the Hindi region from merging into a single language, is that the people of this vast area have seldom tended to evolve a stable community of psychological make-up manifested in emotional and cultural homogeneity. This becomes clear if we look at the cultural and historical past of the various peoples who have been living in the Hindi region all through the centuries.

No common history of the peoples of the Hindi region or even of Uttar Pradesh as such, is so far available and one has to scan diverse materials to get a picture of these ancient peoples march through the last two or three millenniums. The Hindi speaking 'nation' which has built up the largest industrial structure in the colonial world and has thrown up the most powerful bourgeoisie in Asia outside Japan is, strangely enough, not conscious of its history at all. Even after the inroads of capitalist relations into our social polity for over a century, if you tell a person belonging to the Hindi region that his nationality is 'Hindustani' in this particular sense, it might not be easy to make him understand what this really means.

Confining ourselves to Uttar Pradesh is likely to help in bringing the problem into proper focus. The U. P. legislature trying to find a name for itself, in place of the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh, became the scene of an interesting discussion. Scores of names were suggested before Uttar Pradesh was improvised and we had the spectacle of a 'nation' having a history running back to some thousands of years and the cradle of many a civilization, not having yet discovered its own name.

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The Avadhi and Braj peoples constituting the bulk of the population of Uttar Pradesh do not also seem to have developed any emotional and psychological homogeneity or a community of culture, ever since the time of the *Ramayana* and the *Mahābhārata*. It is no accident that Tulsi composed his *Ram Charit Manas* in Avadhi and Sur wrote his *Sur Sagar* in Braj Bhāsha. The elements of similarity between the cultures of these two intimately connected neighbouring peoples are undoubtedly very great. But emphasizing and counting common factors only and ignoring cultural and emotional peculiarities which go back to over two thousand years, would result in regarding many of the present nations as non-existent.

As regards their history, the Avadhi and Braj peoples do not seem ever to have been historically united over a long period of time. The *internal integrative forces* were never *even once* powerful enough to knit these neighbouring peoples into one common life. The wave of Buddhism came from Māgadha and later the Maurya dynasty rose from Patna. In the post Maurya period there were the Saurasena and Kosala kingdoms separately for Braj and Avadh. From the coins of that period some of the rulers of Saurasena appear to be Hindus while those of Kosala Buddhists. Then Kushans came from the west and there began at Muthra the rule of Kanishka famous in Pali literature. Thereafter Guptas came again from Magadha, Hinduism overshadowed Buddhism and Sanskrit pushed aside Prākrits. In the 6th century A.D. there arose in Avadh, which had by then relapsed into forests, petty chiefs who called themselves *Mukharis*. In the 7th century Harshavardhana came from Thanesar and set up a kingdom which also included portions of Avadh for sometime. In the 8th century and later till the coming of Muslims, Gurjara-Pratiharas came from Rajasthan and Malwa and set up their kingdom at Kanauj, Avadh generally remaining outside their sway. The Muslims invariably had separate kingdoms of Avadh and Braj called by them Agra province. When the Britishers lumped together these areas, they could choose no name other than the United Provinces of Agra and Oudh.

There is hardly a century when these ancient and immortal peoples did not evolve new forms of protest and revolt against oppression. These forms whether religious or others were seldom common to Avadhi and Braj peoples, even the *sagun bhakti* flowered in two different forms in these two areas. The feats of courage and bravery of these people have found a permanent place in their cultures. The *bhashas* and sometimes even dialects have separate lores and legends about their heroes. It is difficult to find any legend or ballad of this type which embraces the whole of the people of Uttar Pradesh or of the

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Hindi region. The spirit of national unity manifested itself only as Avadhi, Bundeli, etc. during the Freedom Struggle of 1857. Drawing attention to this Marx observed that the Sepoy Army "had 40,000 soldiers from Avadh, linked with one another by caste and national unity ; the army led a single life : if the authorities offended any single regiment, it was taken as an insult by all the rest."[1]

It appears unnecessary to discuss here the material forces which resulted in these peculiarities of our history. It is, however, clear that whenever the cohesive force of foreign conquest was relaxed it were not the people of U.P. as such who exhibited any sense of unity but those of the areas which developed common *bhashas* now described as *Hindi ki Pradeshic bhashayen*—the regional languages of the Hindi (area). Dr. V. S. Aggarwal, one of the founders of the *Janpad Andolan*, (movement for the furtherance of the 'dialects' of Hindi initiated by Hindi writers under the impetus of the national movement) stated in his manifesto "*Janpad Yojana*" that the present 'dialect' areas have a culture and history going back to several centuries. He cited *Markanday* and other *Puranas* to show "that our dialect areas have retained all those cultural peculiarities till today." He, however, ignored the various integrative forces which had brought together, at places partially and incompletely, the languages of clans, tribes and sub-national groups into the *bhashas*, the promotion of which was the aim of the *Janpad Andolan*.

How these smaller languages and dialects grew into *bhashas* would be clear from a study of the Avadhi language. Since the fall of the Gupta empire many dialects of the Avadhi language have been coming into prominence as the fortunes of tribes and newly emerging nationalities within Avadh rose and fell. Immediately before the coming of Mughals *Baiswari* was the dialect which enjoyed the dominant position. In it were written *Yagnik* and other *ahlas* popular throughout Northern India during that and subsequent periods. Tulsi did not write *Ram Charit Manas* in this dialect, nor did he write in Eastern Avadhi, the language of Mohammad Jaisi's *Padmavat*. The *sufi* Muslim poet Jaisi lived and died in the principality of Amethi, now in Sultanpur district. If he ever went for his language outside the dialect of that principality, it was only to the few neighbouring dialects of Eastern Avadh. However, the growth of mercantile economy had begun to weld together the languages of the people in Avadh into one common language, under the impetus provided by homogeneity which their common history and culture had given them. The extent of the new prosperity in Avadh is borne out by the fact that the land revenues from the Mughal province of Avadh almost doubled in

1, Karl Marx : Chronological Notes on the History of India.

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the course of the sixteenth and the seventeenth century. This had inevitably resulted in the growth of a common standard speech soaring above many of the dialects of Avadh. Tulsi drew upon this language instead of making use of Baiswari or of the language of the Amethi principality. He further helped in evolving this standard speech for Avadh, as did Luther in the case of Germany, by drawing upon the eastern and western dialects of Avadh. Tulsi was born at Banda in Bundelkhand and stayed for long at Banaras in Bhojpur area, where he also acquired some of the Khari Boli terminology of the *nirgun* saints, who had a powerful centre there. His language, therefore, contains some elements of Bundelkhandi, Bhojpuri and Khari Boli but it has always been accepted that its basic grammatical stem and vocabulary are of Avadhi and not of Khari Boli. Despite that the great popularity of Tulsi's *Ramayana,* as *Ram Charit Manas* is called throughout Northern and Central India, is believed to have helped Khari-Boli-Hindi to emerge as a national language of the Hindi region. The fact that *Ram Charit Manas* acquired greater popularity in Punjab than in Braj Bhoom or Rajasthan, where *Krishna Bhakti* continued to be more popular, is ignored altogether; The cause of the popularity of *Ram Charit Manas* lies elsewhere and in understanding it we virtually find the key to many difficult problems of our cultural past.

Tulsi preached *varana dharama*—caste system and *garhast marg* —life of the world against that of renunciation. While emphasizing these, the fact of his having become a mirror of his time in his *Ram Charit Manas* is often ignored. A controversy has been going on among Hindi writers for some years now about the exact character of Tulsi's *Ram Charit Manas.* Between Dr. Ram Bilas Sharma[1] regards Tulsi's writings as a powerful force against the feudalism of his time and Bhadant Anand Kaushalyayan[2] who describes Tulsi as one of the greatest upholders of Brahmanic oppression, these writers have expressed diverse opinions[3], many of them not generally regarding Tulsi as progressive.

It has previously been stated that Tulsi was the best and the foremost representative of the fourth form of religious opinion which had begun to come to the fore with the growth of mercantile economy. This form, preached both the acceptance and criticism of social evils and treating them as the squalid foundation on which the life of the spirit could be and should be based. This

1. Naya Path, Lucknow—August, 1953.
2. Naya Path, Lucknow—July, 1955.
3. Amongst these, three outstanding contributions are by Bhagwat Saran Upadhyaye (*Naya Path* November, 1953), Aditya Misra (*Naya* Sahitya, October, 1951) and Parshu Ram Chaturvedi (Kalpana, February 1953).

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served the best interests of the trading classes, because it not only helped them to reconcile religion to the new business practices needed for commercial competition but also to curb the revolutionary and anarchic tendencies of *nirgunvad* and asceticism so deadly for the developing economy. With the growth of new economic life, the need for synthesis of the greed and squalor of the external world with life of religion, now more and more personal and 'inner', became paramount and thus this fourth form of religious opinion acquired increasing popularity.

Tulsi's assertion of the virtues of the caste system and the worship of the *brahmin*—at innumerable places Lord Rama himself is shown as worshipping the feet of the *brahmins*—was not at that time as reactionary as some believe it to be[1]. Looking at the coming of Muslims as we do from a distance of many centuries, one is likely to miss the point that during those times the people might have been having a feeling that their very survival was at stake. Tulsi says in the *Balkhand* of *Ram Charit Manas* that "In whatever land they (the Muslim invaders) find cows and *brahmins*, they set fire to village, city and town". Most of the arid regions of the Panjab, Rajasthan and Sind resulted from the despoliation of forests and irrigation works by the early Muslim armies. The deserts of Rajasthan and Eastern Sind were created by these hordes just as the Great Sahara was mainly the creation of nomad Arab tribes who "skinned alive" the forested lands of North and Central Africa[2].

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1. John Irwin : "It is perhaps sufficient here to say that the essential character of medieval society in India was not, of course, determined by the caste system, but by the craft mode of production whereby each individual fulfilled an organic, functional role within the community on the basis of craft. The rigid hierarchical divisions must be seen in relation to the wider socio-economic integration. A person was identical with his role in society, and he did not yet conceive himself as an individual except through the medium of social role ; and although there was no personal freedom in the modern bourgeois sense of unrestricted choice, there was a great deal of *concrete individualism* in real life. It is only today when the medieval mode of production has become a fetter on social advance, that the tyrannical and reactionary nature of the caste system is revealed. (Class Struggle in Indian History and Culture—Modern Quarterly, Vol I, No 2, March 1946)

2. Cf. Richard St. Barbe Baker : "Sahara Challenge"-London 1954 Writing on "The Problem of the Sahara", Prof. S. Yarkov observes: "One thousand five hundred years ago the Arabs appeared in Central Africa and in the course of their advance into the heart of the continent destroyed the ago-old forests. This was followed by the depredations of their huge herds of camels and goats which consumed much of grass tree and leaves".—New Times, Moscow, September 8, 1955.

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This accounts for the large-scale emigration of Rajput, Abhira and Gurjara tribes from Rajasthan near about the tenth century A. D. As the people living in many parts of North-West India "became like atoms of dust scattered in all directions" through ravage and pillage by the invading armies and as those in some other areas were compelled to leave their hearths and homes by the on-coming aridness, the tales they carried enlarged upon this destruction and despoliation. If the religious practices of the new rulers were altogether different, their war practices too must have appeared equally incomprehensible to the people living in those times. Even Akbar ordered a general massacre after his conquest of Chittor and constructed a tower of skulls at Gujarat. Century after century the new invaders, quite different from those who came before them, kept pouring in. Those endless marches and subsequently wars of succession repeatedly laid waste their towns and villages. Seeing this the Indians of those times must have been seized with a mortal fear. Even the popular acceptance of Islam as a form of defiance and revolt by some low-caste craft-groups, clans and tribes, increased the sense of insecurity and fear of others. This made them cling on persistently to the caste system, which though the cause of the stagnation of their social life, was also a means of its survival. The caste system had helped in creating a climate of opinion in which the *vaishyas* and the *shudras* suffered exploitation by *kshatriyas* and *brahmins* and surrendered their surplus without much coercion. Substitution of force by religious sanctions gave cohesion where there would have been conflict and this imparted an unchangeability and stability to the system. The *kshatriya* class had gone to pieces under the blows struck by the Muslim invaders. No wonder that the caste system, as preached by Tulsi, stood only for unconditional surrender before the *brahmins*. This was a culmination of the process referred to earlier, whereby all the non-Hindu communities and creeds in India had increasingly tended to accept Brahminism in order to resist the impact of Islam. How effective this acceptance of the caste system and the supremacy of the Brahmin was as a weapon of survival is seen in the rise of Sikhism to fulfil a similar need in a different way. Sikh Gurus stoutly opposed everything that came with the Muslims, e. g. tobacco and cutting of the hair—according to Al-Beruni and others, Indians before the coming of Muslims used to keep long hair and beard excepting some sections of the *brahmins* and *sanyasis*.[1] Sikh Gurus, however, tried to undermine the rigidity of the caste system. The result was that in the Panjab resistance to Islam, though very militant, lacked the impregnable strength which the caste system gave it elsewhere in Northern India.

1. Al-Beruni, Kitab-ul-Hind—Anjuman-e-Tarraqi-e-Urdu, Delhi.

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If Tulsi Das had really believed in Brahmanic orthodoxy, he would have stuck on to Sanskrit, the traditional language of the Brahmins. In the introductory *padas* of *Ram Charit Manas*, Tulsi stated that he was anxious to keep himself away from the traditional language of the pandits and wanted to write in the people's language. Tulsi's adoption of the nirgun tradition of Nam *i.e. Ram Nam*—was rather an attack on Brahmin priest-craft. The *nirgun bhakti* movement by calling upon the individual to seek perfection in his own way irrespective of caste, creed or walk of life had in fact provided one of the greatest challenges to orthodoxy during the feudal period.

The *Ramayana* tale was becoming increasingly popular in the centuries preceding Tulsi.[1] It embodied a great message of hope, for its story recounted that even in the darkness of an age when the demon-king Ravana had conquered all the world, heaven and hell, Rama, a descendant of the sun-god won victory and dispelled darkness. This story reasserted the sanctity of family life and the need for personal virtues, in a world, the squalor of which was becoming more and more beyond human control, as money economy advanced. In an atmosphere of moral laxity, it emphasized the need for fidelity, the sanctity of promise and the value of human relations. The story of Lord Rama really very much suited those times, and there must have been a widespread demand for its rendering into spoken languages. Sidney Finkelstein[2] has described how translation of the Bible into the vernacular languages and the interpretation of religion in terms of the needs of the people became in Europe, one of the forms taken by the struggles of the peasantry, the weavers, the artisans and the middle classes against the feudal lords.[3] Such a translation of the Ramayana must have then become the crying need in India as persons alien in religion and race became the ruling chieftains and feudal lords. In preparing the popular version of the Ramayana, Tulsi Das took over all the prosodial forms created by the people. While upholding the caste system and the holiness of *brahmins*. he harboured sympathy and friendship for all classes. The *shudra-Nishada* is received at Ayodhya 'like Lakshman' and on departing Lord Rama calls him 'a friend' and 'a brother.'

1. A. L. Basham : "It is perhaps significant that his (Rama's) cult became really popular after the Muslim invasion"—(The Wonder that was India).
2. Sidney Finkelstein : How Music Expresses Ideas—International Publishers; New York.
3. Dinesh Chandra Sen in his celebrated *History of Bengali Language and Literature* (Calcutta 1911) stated how in his life-long efforts to collect medieval vernacular manuscripts, he almost invariably found these only in low caste houses.

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Tulsi's *Ram Charit Manas* acquired great popularity amongst Hindus from beyond the banks of the Indus to the mouth of the Ganges and continued to be popular all these centuries not because it was in their own colloquial language or that they understood it as much as a native of Avadh would, but because it became an instrument with which the people could cling on, under most adverse circumstances, to what they believed to be the best and the noblest in their cultural heritage. Emphasis on *Ram Nam* in the tradition of the *nirgun* saints in addition to the *sagun* idol-worship, together with a faithful depiction of those times—even King Dashratha's *raj-sabha* is described as *darbar* and Lord Rama is again and again referred to as *Sahib*—gave it unprecedented popularity. The fact of its being in Avadhi, the language of the land of Rama, rather helped in increasing its mystic influence over the people who could not fully follow it.

It is stated as an argument against the Avadhi language that "the Avadhi spoken in Unao, Sitapur, Allahabad and Jaunpur districts varies greatly."[1] This is partly true and there is no denying the fact that the standard languages could not develop in their fulness in Northern India, particularly in the Hindi area, because mercantile economy received an early set-back and there was rather great impoverishment of the people under the later Mughals. Subsequently, came the British rule which strengthened feudal relations side by side with the development of capitalist forms of exploitation. However, lack of the full development of these *bhashas* would show that if languages could not grow on such a small scale, how impossible it was for them to integrate on a scale as vast as the entire Hindi region. What is worth noting is that Tulsi did not write in any dialect of Avadhi but in the language soaring above and born out of those dialects. Further Tulsi's *Ramāyana* has enriched the spiritual life of Avadh to an extent and in a manner unknown elsewhere it acquired popularity. Even the Gazetteer of India admitted :—

> "Eastern Hindi (Avadhi) through the works of Muhamed Mullik Jaisi and Tulsi Das became the language of poetry of the very highest order. This poetry being founded on the genuine tongue of the people and acquiring no fictitious dignity by bastard addition of Sanskrit words has *reacted* on the spoken language, so that the forms of speech heard on the fields of Avadh possess the characteristic beauties of poetry and clearness. Every Avadh rustic is soaked in his national literature and quotations from his great writers

1. Dr. Ram Bilas Sharma : On the Language Question in India—The Communist, September-October, 1949, Peoples Publishing House, Bombay.

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fall more naturally from his lips than the words of Burns fall from those of a Scotsman."[1]

Similarly Sur made use of the newly developing standard language of the Braj region and in turn helped in the evolution of Braj Bhasha. A Rajasthani poet of that period, significantly, referred in a couplet to the country of Braj people as Braj Desh, and their *common* language as "sweet". Abul Fazal in *Ayeen-e-Akbari* distinguishes the language of Delhi—*Zaban-e-Dehlvi*—from Braj Bhasha. During the time of Aurangzeb, Mirza Khan included the grammar of Braj Bhasha in his book entitled "Tohfa-tul-Hind." Not only in the history of 'Middle Hindi' literature but in that of Hindi literature in general, *Riti Kal* is considered to be the richest and the most glorious period. This prolific flowering of literature in Braj Bhasha began after the Mughal court shifted to Agra, the heart of Braj area. If in other languages of the Hindi region similarly rich flowering of literature could not come about for one reason or the other, it does not mean that standard languages were not sprouting and growing in those areas.

1. Gazetteer of India Vol.

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CHAPTER SEVEN

THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF MODERN HINDI AND URDU.

Hindi or Hindustani as it is sometimes called, is in many respects the greatest heritage of the people of Northern India. While emphasizing its non-colloquial character outside the Khari Boli area, where *bhashas* or 'regional languages' are the colloquial speeches, it is often thought that Hindi and the *bhashas* are mutually exclusive. The supporters of Hindi deny the existence of these *bhashas* altogether and the supporters of *bhashas* have equally vehemently begun to disclaim any link with Hindi. Both the groups find no dearth of analogies and parallels from the linguistic history of other countries, while all the time over-looking the peculiarities of our own.

The great part religion played in determining the peculiarities of our history has already been referred to. Everywhere organised religion has been the essential part of the feudal system, one could not be changed without the other, as is shown by the Reformation in Europe. History of the scientific revolution in Europe also shows the great effect religion, as a superstructure, had on the basis. It took the best part of 1000 years in carrying out the amount of thinking that without these accretions and obstructions would have been packed in less than 200 years.

In India religion had a much more profound effect on society because it altogether sterilized scientific thinking. The superstructure comes into existence to serve the basis actively and to enable it to consolidate itself. Later with changes in the basis, without which no progress is possible, the old superstructure becomes a brake and side by side arise new forms of superstructure to serve the new elements growing within the basis and to contend against the old ones. In India religious superstructure became unusually active and exceedingly paramount. Seeping into every aspect of superstructure and the basis, it did not merely consolidate but also solidified production-relations which mainly constitute the basis. More than that it virtually solidified the basic instruments of production—methods of agriculture and transport have remained changeless throughout the long period of feudalism in India. It has also been mentioned earlier that one of the means through which this came about was the caste system which

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stabilized forms of exploitation based upon slavery and on family-commune and village-commune of the earlier epoch, side by side with feudalization of society. Religion, likewise, has had an equally profound effect on linguistic evolution in India. Unless we can understand the part it has played in making languages based upon or mixed with Khaṛi Boli generally intelligible in many parts of Northern India without superseding or supplanting the colloquial speeches, we will not be able to appreciate the nature and importance of Modern Hindi.

Braj Bhasha has been associated with *Krishna bhakti*, Persianised form of Khaṛi Boli with Muslim religion in India and some Khaṛi Boli vocables and grammatical forms with *yogis*, *sadhus* and *nirgun* saints. *Krishna bhakti* was centred round Muthra and did not have any order of wandering mendicants though devotees of Lord Krishna generally everywhere preferred Braj Bhasha for their *bhakti* songs. As against that Khari Boli was carried far and wide by the *nirgun sadhus*, *yogis* and mendicants, who wandered from place to place and who had their centres all over India. There were times during the feudal period when every fifth or sixth Indian in Northern India was a *sadhu*. Throughout that period, their number used to be quite large. Tulsi in *Ram Charit Manas* described this as one of the evils of *Kaliyuga* and stated that "men of the lowest castes—oilmen, potters, *chandalas*, *kiratas*, *kols*—shave their heads and become wandering mendicants, claiming reverence from the *brahmins*". This, no doubt, brought into existence many centres and groups of people outside the Khaṛi Boli area which had developed some familiarity with Khaṛi Boli elements.

A similar impetus was received by Khaṛi Boli when Urdu developed at the Mughal courts and in the Deccan kingdoms and when Muslim saints—*sufis*—and Indian Muslims outside the Khari Boli area took to Urdu as the language of their religion.[1] In many parts of India Urdu is still called *Nabi-ji-ki-Zaban* or the language of the Prophet. It is recorded in the Census Report for 1931 that some aristocratic Bengali families tried to discard Bengali and to take to Urdu after their conversion to Islam. Dr. Uday Narain Tiwari refers to a language called *Sheikhai* or *Julahi Boli* which contain an admixture of Arabic,

1. Dr. Mohammad Hasan : "Directly assisting the process were the scattered groups of Muslim mystics who travelled far and wide with the message of love and universal fraternity on their lips... Naturally enough these mystics adopted the syntax and the grammatical structure of the existing languages and used words of Persian and Arabic which also took the form of another script later on"--"Some Thoughts on Cultural Commission Report"; Indian Literature, Bombay, No. 3, 1953. Also Cf. Maulvi Abdul Haq : Sufis' Work in the Early Development of Urdu Language—The Anjuman-e-Taraqqi-e-Urdu (India), Delhi 1939.

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Persian and Khari Boli vocables with *Maithili* which Muslim weavers—the *Ansars*—employ as their jargon in North Bihar.[1] In the Bhojpuri areas, Urdu is called "*Mughalai*" or the language associated with the Mughals. In South India Urdu used to be called Moors—a language of the Muslims. According to the Census Report for 1951, nearly five lakh Muslims in the Madras State, claim Urdu as their mother-tongue. Referring to this the Report says : "It is true that these Muslims study Quoran in Arabic, but their mother-tongue is undoubtedly Tamil...But they claim Urdu or Hindustani as their mother-tongue".[2]

Undue emphasis has been laid on the traders from Delhi carrying Khari Boli to towns in other parts of India after the downfall of the Mughal Empire and thereby making it a colloquial speech in those parts.[3] Traders normally tend to adopt the language of the customers they come to live with and gradually lose their own. Many of the towns laid waste in the Panjab by the invading hordes survive today only in the names of sub-castes and family surnames of *kshatriyas, aroras, agarwalas,* etc. who emigrated to the east. *Chope* a sub-caste of *aroras* originated from Chaupayata, another *arora* caste *Baluje* fromValijyaka and a *kshatriya* caste *Batra* from Vatraka. *Sharaliya* a sub-caste of the *aggarwala* community traces its original seat to Saharala in Ludhiana district, referred to as Saralaka by Pāṇini. All these castes and sub-castes of the trading communities from the Panjab and the Khari Boli area continue to live on in the Uttar Pradesh and other states without retaining the slightest link with their earlier languages. The traders who migrated to east, after the desolation of Delhi, would have likewise forgotten their Khari Boli language—and many of them did forget it—if Urdu had not been enforced as the court language of Bihar, U. P. and Central India by the British rulers. Moreover, these traders were hardly a lakh in number, while the wandering mendicants and the Muslim saints and laymen who took to Urdu as their religious language were in millions. There can be no two opinions about the language of religion having a much more profound influence on an Indian than the language of trade.

A contributory factor, generally overlooked, is that the grammar of Khari Boli is very simple. Grierson referring to this observed : "It is worth noting that of all the languages of Northern India it is the one which carries analysis to its furtherest extreme. It has only one tense, the present conjunctive for its verbs and has only one true case for its nouns. Nearly

1. Dr. Uday Narain Tiwari : *Bhojpuri Bhasha Aur Sahitya.*
2. Census Report of India 1951, Madras-Coorg Vol. 2, p. 1.
3. Cf. Introduction to *Hindi Shabad Sagar* ; Kashi Nagri Pracharni Sabha.

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all the accidents of time and relations are expressed by the aid of participles, auxiliary verbs or post-positions."[1]

This brings us to the question as to whether Urdu originated under Muslim influence in India or without it. For several decades now a lot of hair-splitting has been going on regarding the origin of Urdu and Modern Hindi. Many supporters of Urdu have been contesting the statement, originally made by Grierson, that Urdu resulted from the impact of Islam on India. They rather contend that Modern Hindi was the creation of the British and resulted merely from the substitution of *tadbhava* colloquial words in Urdu by *tatsam* Sanskrit words. Persian words probably began to come into the Indian languages in the beginning of the Christian era when fresh waves of immigrants brought some of these words with them. Later Panjab came under the Persian overlordship. Further, some link has throughout persisted between India and Iran[2]. There is, however, no doubt that a majority of the Persian words and administrative terms at present in the Indian languages got infiltrated after Persian became the official language of the Mughal courts. A similar phenomenon took place in Eastern Europe also and the languages of the countries like Yugoslavia which came under the suzerainty of Turks have a larger number of Persian, Arabic and Turkish words than their neighbours who remained outside it.[3]

The birth of Urdu is, however, quite different from the process of mixing up of some Persian and Arabic words into the languages of India. Such a borrowing of Persian and Arabic words took place in Pashto, Panjabi, Marathi,[4] Bengali,[5] and even Tamil[6] without in any way giving rise to a language similar to Urdu. Maulvi Abdul Haq has drawn attention to the presence of a large number of Persian words in the Marāthi language[4] and Prof. H. C. Paul has similarly referred to the presence of a large number of Persian and Arabic words in colloquial Bengali.[5]

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1. Linguistic Survey of India Vol. IX Part II.
2. Cf. R.E.M. Wheeler : Iran and India in Pre-Islamic Times. Ancient India No. 4, July 1947-January 1948, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi.
3. Cf. Muayen-ud-din : Urdu words in the Yugoslav Language, *Hamari Zaban*, Aligarh. June 15, 1955.
4. Maulvi Abdul Haq : *Marāhati Zaban Par Farsi ka Asar*. Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Urdu, Aurangabad.
5. Cf. H.C. Paul : *Shifted Meanings of some Arabic and Persian Words in Bengali*—Calcutta Review, August 1952 and November 1953.
6. C.f. V. I. Subramaniam : *Muslim Literature in Tamil*—Tamil Culture. Madras, January, 1953.

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Urdu arose as an artificial language of the Muslim ruling class and its entourage during the Mughal period. It resulted from the grafting of a large Persian and Arabic vocabulary and some of their grammatical rules on the grammatical stem and basic stock of words of Khari Boli. Coming of the Muslims to India and the establishment of their government at Delhi is the direct cause of the evolution of Urdu. India is not the only country where marriage between the native and a foreign language gave birth to a new artificial or colloquial language. The word *lingua franca* itself was originally the name of the "mixture of Italian, French Greek and Spanish used in the 'Levant' "[1] During the last half a century or so, the grafting of French with Bhojpuri, the native tongue of the plantation workers who emigrated from Eastern U.P. and Bihar to Mauritius, has resulted in an altogether new language—the 'Creole'. The Papiamento language of Curacoa, a small island above South America, similarly came into existence as a result of the mixture of Spanish and English. This is "a language of the poor who have no opportunity to learn foreign languages but who must have some means of communication with the foreigners in order to make a living"[2] India is also not the only country where religious differences have resulted in different languages, Croatian and Serbian are essentially the same languages but they are presented in very different outer forms because of the religious differences of the people speaking them. The two languages of the Jewish people Judesmo and Yiddish came into existence by the mixing up of Hebrew with Spanish and German respectively.

The two names of the *Urdu* language, Rekhta and Urdu, are significant. Rekhta meant a mixture and Urdu was the name for the entourage of the Moghul courts where that mixing up of languages took place. With the growth of this language as the religious language of the Muslims and for the purposes of general intercourse between the ruling class and the people, it acquired more and more colloquial elements, but throughout it remained a class-language. The general association of this language with the Muslims cannot be denied. This has been admitted by the greatest among Urdu writers. Insha-Allah described it in *Darya-e-Latafat* as "the language of Shahjehanabad (Delhi)'s courtiers, camp-followers, courtesans, Muslim artisans, libertines, pages and slaves." Mir Aman Dehlvi in the Introduction to *Bag-O-Bahar* described how Urdu arose at the Mughal court particularly under Emperor Shahjehan when the city of Delhi was described both as

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1. C. f. Concise Oxford Dictionary.
2. New Times, Moscow, No. 2 of 1950—Travel Notes.

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Shahjehanabad and Urdu-e-Mualla.[1] Introduction to the greatest Urdu lexicon—the four volume *Farhang-e-Asafia* quoted a Mughal prince Arshad Gorgani as saying : "Everyone admits that idiomatic Urdu is the language of Timuri (Mughal) princes and that Red Fort is its mint. Therefore Syed Ahmed Dehlvi used to send for us and would not care (for the language) of the common people." Maulvi Syed Ahmed himself observed in the same Introduction : "I cannot accept the position that the language should depart from the standard idiom.....We cannot allow our language to become that of the riff-raff, the washermen or the uncouth or merely an assortment or a jumble of words. We also do not like the Urdu which has been adopted by Indian Christians, new converts to Islam, the *khansamas* and orderlies of *Sahibs*, camp followers and by the mixed population of the cantonments—a language ridiculed with the appellation of *Purdo*." In the same connection Shams-ul-Ulema Maulvi Mohd. Azad remarked in his Nazam-e-Azad : "Urdu belongs to the descendants of those who actually spoke Persian. That is why they exactly copied Persian metres, the colourful ideas of Persian (literature) and various forms of Persian prosody." Denying the presence of Persian grammatical forms in Urdu, Ali Sardar Jafri has maintained that "the words *ghareeb* (poor) and *kitab* (book) in their plural form in the Persian would be *ghuraba* and *kutub* but in Urdu they have become *gharibon* nnd *kitaben* or *kitabon*."[2] There is not a single Urdu grammar which has disallowed the Persian forms of plurals—all of them rather sanction it. There is not a single important Urdu writer who has not used the Persian forms, the best among them more often than the Indian ones.[3]

The fact that many outstanding Urdu writers are Hindus and Sikhs while all the Hindi writers are Hindus, is often put forward as an argument in support of the non-communal character of Urdu and against its association with the coming of Muslims. When Persian was the language of the Muslim courts Hindus wrote in Persian as fluently as they do in English today. The British rulers made Urdu the court language and the medium of instruction in certain parts of the country and the people from all communities in these areas had to learn this

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1. After Emperor Shahjehan the name Urdu-e-Mualla—the Exalted Camp—became restricted to the areas between *Dariba* and Red Fort, Delhi. Eversince then abbreviation "Urdu" has continued to be used for that part of Delhi. A *chhatta* song of 1857 Mutiny states :

   They looted *Urdu* and *Dariba* and Maliwara too ;
   Looted the Gurwal's banking firms and all the temples too.

2. Ali Sardar Jafri : Why Two Literary Forms Urdu & Hindi—Indian Literature No. 1 of 1953.

3. Pertinently enough the Urdu publishing house which has brought out most of Ali Sardar Jafri's works is callid "Kutub."

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language. This has lasted longest in the Paniab, which accounts for the fact that most of the non-Muslim Urdu writers today are Panjabis whose mother-tongue is not Urdu.

Another problem which has been perplexing historians of Hindi and Urdu is, when colloquial speeches change from area to area and not from community to community, how can Hindus and Muslims have separate preferences in regard to language. The paradox that Hindi and Urdu cannot be two separate languages without Hindus and Muslims becoming two separate nations baffles them. The fact that various groups and classes within a nation can have their own jargons created out of the common speeeh, is overlooked by them. The colloquial speech common to Hindus and Muslims is Khari Boli in areas near about Delhi and the respective *bhashas* in other areas. Hindi and Urdu are invariably referred to as two forms of the Hindustani language, while a colloquial speech necessarily exists in one form only. The very recognition of these two separate forms is an admission of the fact that one or both of these are non-colloquial languages.

Over a large part of Northern India Urdu is thus a non-colloquial language limited mainly to Muslims and the descendants of those Hindu castes which once came into intimate contact with them. This Urdu should not be confused with Khari Boli which did exist almost in its present form at the time of Amir Khusro and earlier. Amir Khusro never claimed this language to be the colloquial speech of Northern India and described it only as the "language of Delhi and the neighbourhood." Much has been made of Amir Khusro's few supposed writings in Hindi even though these are universally admitted to be unauthentic. Similarly it has been proved that *Khusro's Khaliq Bari* claimed by the historians of both Urdu and Hindi as the first extant work of their language, was not by Amir Khusro but a work of the seventeenth century A.D. by one Zai-ul-Din Khusro.[1] However, Khari Boli existed before and side by side with Urdu and the other *bhashas*. The emergence of Urdu and Braj Bhasha rather prevented its growth beyond a 'dialect' despite its being the language of the capital town.

Subsequent emergence of Hindi as a non-colloquial language is somewhat similar to Urdu. Sometimes the origin of Hindi is traced to the twelfth or thirteenth century when early Muslim writers used the word Hindvi or Hindi, not for a particular language but as an adjective for 'Hind' and for all the languages of Northern India. It is, however, generally agreed that "literary

1. C.f. *Khaliq Bari* edited by Prof. Mahmud Sherwani—Anjumane-Taraqi-e-Urdu, Delhi.

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Hindi came into its own after Braj Bhasha."[1] In the histories of Hindi literature *Riti Kal* consisting entirely of writings in Braj Bhasha lasted from *Samvat* 1700 to 1900 (1643 to 1843 A. D.) and immediately after that began the period of Khaṛi Boli Hindi. Even though no explanation is given for the exclusion from Hindi literature of the later writings in Braj Bhasha etc. which have ceaselessly been taking place, it is sometimes admitted that literature in Khaṛi Boli Hindi did not exist in the earlier period and that "it really began with Bhartendu Harish Chandra[2] (1850-85 A.D.)".

There are two theories regarding the origin of Modern Hindi during this period. The first is that it resulted from the substitution in Urdu of all Persian and many Hindustani words by *tatsam* Sanskrit words. There is no denying the fact that much that was published in Devanagri[3] script in the beginning was more or less Urdu, which was later on progressively Sanskritized. The second theory is that Modern Hindi arose independently of Urdu or even of the pure Khaṛi Boli of the area near about Delhi. The fall of the Mughal empire resulted in the spread of Khaṛi Boli to the cities in the entire Hindustani region and beyond. Western cities like Delhi and Agra lost their splendour and cities like Lucknow, Faizabad, Banaras, Patna, Murshidabad gained importance. Hindu traders of Delhi and the neighbouring towns went in search of livelihood to the eastern towns. The Khaṛi Boli they spoke was a natural speech and not the *Zaban-e-Urdu-e-Mualla* of the former Muslim ruling class. This colloquial language of traders from the west maintained its basic character though it everywhere got tainted with the local speech. It is maintained that it was this Khari Boli and not the pure Khari Boli of the areas near about Delhi which became the base of Modern Hindi.[4]

There are elements of truth in both the above theories regarding the origin of Modern Hindi. A fact generally overlooked is that Khaṛi Boli elements had already acquired comparative familiarity in centres of trade and pilgrimage in Northern India, due to factors which have been previously referred to. There is also no denying the fact that communal sentiments against Urdu, which had been declared the court language of

1. Ram Chandra Shukla : *Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas.*
2. Braj Rattan Das : *Khari Boli Hindi ka Itihas.*
3. First periodical in the Devanagri script published from U.P., the *Banaras Akhbar* (1844), was in Urdu language and not in Modern Hindi.
4. Cf. Introduction to Hindi Shabad Sāgar, Kashi Nāgri Pracharni Sabha.

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areas with predominantly Hindu population also played a part in the evolution of Modern Hindi.

What distinguishes Modern Hindi from all other languages of Northern India is the change-over from *tadbhava* to *tatsam*.[1] Less than a century ago the vocabulary of Khaṛi Boli Hindi began to be changed altogether and it was remarked by Grierson that "Hindi has fallen under the fatal spell of Sanskrit." All Indian languages till then had *tadbhava* words only resulting from the elimination of compound consonants and dipthongs and from the natural replacement of cerebral sounds by labial, dental and palatal. "In five hundred years these languages had expressed with crystal clearness any idea which the mind of man can conceive. Its old literature contains some of the heights of poetry. Treatises on philosophy and rhetoric are found in it, in which the subject has been handled with hardly any use of Sanskrit word."[2] Yet, inspite of 'Hindi' possessing a vocabulary and a power of expression scarcely inferior to any other language, it became a fashion to use Sanskrit words. This change-over to *tatsam* is less than a century old and it has made Modern Hindi very distant, not only from the *bhashas* but also from the colloquial Khaṛi Boli of the areas near about Delhi. The controversy about Urdu and Hindi being the languages of two different groups in the same areas gets easily solved when it is realised that both Urdu and Hindi are non-colloquial languages created out of the same speech—Khaṛi Boli—of Delhi and the neighbourhood.

The relationship of Khaṛi Boli Hindi to the 'regional languages' and the chances of its ever wiping them out will be discussed in a later chapter. Similarly the proper use, enrichment and carrying forward of the great heritage which the Hindi language is, will be discussed later. What needs to be emphasized here is its non-colloquial character. Only non-colloquial languages and class-jargons can emerge as suddenly as did Modern Hindi. The non-colloquial character of this language is admitted even by those who regard it as the *lingua franca* of the entire Hindi Region. In the Introduction to *Hindi Shabad Sagar* published by Kashi Nāgri Prachārni Sabha it is pointed out that Hindi today has to occupy a place which belonged to Sanskrit in the Gupta period, regardless of the fact that Sanskrit had by then become completely isolated from the colloquial speeches. Dr. Ram Bilas Sharma has conceded that "in the countryside the people

1. Grierson : "*Tadbhava* words are those which have descended into modern vernaculars from Prakrit sources while *tatsam* words are those which have been borrowed in later times direct from Sanskrit to supply real or fancied deficiencies in vocabulary."

2. Linguistic Survey of India, Vol. IX, p. 55.

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speak a number of dialects which together are grouped as Avadhi, Braj Bhasha etc."[1] Dr. S. K. Chatterji describes the small elementary vocabulary of Khaṛi Boli generally understood in Northern India as "Bazar Hindustani" or "Laghu Hindi" and does not regard it as fit for any cultural purpose. He suggests that its grammar should be simplified and such changes as the making of all nouns and verbs masculine should be made. This, according to him, will help it to become a better 'communication-speech' of the Hindustani region's polygot towns.[2] Only the grammatical rules of a non-colloquial language can thus be artificially created. The grammar of a colloquial language consists merely of the observed facts of the language.

Munshi Prem Chand is stated to have once observed: "The Hindi literature has no past. The literature in Braj Bhasha or Avadhi is not Hindi literature."[3] Braj Bhasha, Avadhi and other languages could not have perished as suddenly as Hindi is believed to have come into existence. The history of Modern Hindi literature outlined in the various standard works on the subject would further bear out its non-colloquial nature. Ram Chandra Shukla in *Hindi Sahitya ka Itihas* and Braj Rattan Das in *Khaṛi Boli Hindi ka Itihas* state that the beginning of Khaṛi Boli Hindi "in a regular manner" was first made by Munshi Sadasukhlal, Insha Allaha Khan, Lallu Lal and Sadal Mishra near about 1803 at Fort Williams. It is contested by both that this happened under the influence of the British. Most of the writings of the above-mentioned four persons are claimed more by Urdu and some of the regional languages than by Hindi. Reference has also been made to William Carey's translation of the Bible into Sanskritized Hindi during the same period. It is mentioned that thereafter, "there is a virtual vacuum in Hindi prose from 1803 A.D. to 1858 A.D."[4] when it has its real beginning in the *Bhartendu* period. Hindi poetry, however, took longer to come into shape. Starting in the beginning of this century, it took more than two decades to win the race against Braj Bhasha as the language of poetry.[5]

The above facts would show that Modern Hindi is a non-colloquial language, the colloquial speeches—the *bhashas* continue to live on and have some independent literature of their own,

1. Ram Bilas Sharma: On the Language Question in India; The Communist, Sept. Oct. 1939.
2. Cf. S.K. Chatterji: Indo-Aryan and Hindi.
3. Quoted by Braj Rattan Das in *Khaṛi Boli Hindi ka Itihas.*
4. *Ibid.*
5. The translation of Goldsmith's Hermit published in 1920 is believed by some to be the first poem in Modern Hindi.

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though it is no more included in the histories of Hindi literature, as used to be done before the Modern Hindi period. By not recognising the non-colloquial nature of Modern Hindi and mistaking it for the spoken language of the whole of Hindi area, we lose sight of the spirit and importance of this great heritage. No other people in the world speaking different languages have been bequeathed a better cementing force. It is not necessary, at present, to treat the peoples speaking the different *bhashas*— Braj, Avadhi, Rajasthani, Bundelkhandi, Bhojpuri, Maithili, Maghadi as full fledged nations in the modern sense or to treat these *bhashas* as fully developed national languages but these speeches, each a mother tongue of crores of people, undoubtedly exist and none has ever denied it. No doubt, it will be wrong to treat Hindi as the colloquial and therefore the only language of the entire Hindi region. The peculiarities of our history have made Hindi a language floating above the colloquial speeches, without ever doing them any harm, If this did not happen elsewhere, it is because the factors which brought about the present position of Hindi were peculiar to our country. The co-existence and fraternization of Modern Hindi and the *bhashas* is the cultural need of the people of the Hindi region. Without their mutual give and take, Hindi itself will wither away and die.

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CHAPTER EIGHT

HINDI AND SOME FOREIGN LANGUAGES— COMPARISON AND CONTRAST

Analogies are often drawn from the linguistic history of Europe and other countries to establish that Modern Hindi has developed in the usual way, into a colloquial speech of the people of Northern India and the various 'dialects' have either disappeared or are in the process of disappearing. In this connection the inadmissibility of citing analogies without referring to material and cultural peculiarities of the various peoples is seldom recognised. What is worse, many of the analogies are based on incomplete information or are mere suppositions thought out in the zeal to prove a particular case.

The analogy most often cited is that of the English language. It is often said that English has superseded Welsh and Celtic and through this process of eliminating the 'dialects' of the British Isles, the dialect around London has grown into the national language of the entire country. Without going into the rationale of linguistic evolution in Britain, it may be worthwhile to examine whether English has really been able to wipe out languages like Welsh and Celtic which, though belonging to a people very small in population, have nevertheless been having a distinct existence going back to a long period of time.

There is sufficient evidence to show that these languages are not only current and alive but have begun to enrich themselves with particular rapidity in recent years. A recently published comparative review of the "Two Literatures of Wales" states that there exists "a great corpus of literature in the Welsh language, a living literature to which far more Welshmen contribute than those who could fairly be grouped together as Anglo-Welsh writers."[1]

It has been regarded "a miracle" that in a small island like Great Britain with its forty-eight million inhabitants "there still survives a small country of two million (Welsh) people which has its own language, a language totally different from English and unrelated to it."[2] The attempts to uproot and wipe out

1. Times Literary Supplement London, August 5, 1955.
2. Wyn Griffith : The Voice of Wales—British Council.

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this language have been accompanied by most brutal efforts to uproot and wipe out the Welsh people but these have been of no avail. About a century ago, when the economic domination of Wales by England began, there was hardly a Welshman who could speak English ; now half the Welshmen cannot speak their own mother-tongue. The British Government tried to uproot the Welsh nation in the most brutal manner. Wyn Griffith giving an example of this observes : (Between the two World Wars), "when the years of depression came upon us all, the Government decided to cure Wales of its economic ills by removing from the country well over 250,000 of its young people. It is hard to believe, because it is almost half of the total youth of the small Welsh nation, but it is true."[1] Wyn Griffith adds :

> "While this decline in vitality was spreading over the country, it became apparent to some that the first casuality would be that consciousness of 'difference' of nationality in its true sense, which was embodied in the Welsh language. If that was lost, the rest would follow quickly.....In the eyes of the State, Wales was not a nation, but a collection of counties at the tail end of a long list, of no special importance and somewhat of a nuisance to the Administration.....Wales was sinking into impotence and unimportance. And yet there were poets in Wales of a quality the country had not known for some centuries, better story writers than it had ever known, more and better scholars in the language and its literature and history. There was a large literary renaissance and its effects were wide-spread. The written language has a lustre new in its long history and it was reaching forward to embrace subject matter of every kind."[2]

In Cornish a language which is supposed to have been dead for some centuries now, literary activities have restarted and a literary magazine "Kernow" written entirely in Cornish made its appearance about a decade ago.

Steps to wipe out the Irish language have been equally fruitless, though Irish is today spoken only by 20% of the people of Ireland. The population of Ireland in 1840 was about seven millions. Over five million persons died in the British made famine of 1844-46. Another four millions have since emigrated. Further, there was the forcible imposition of the English language and wave after wave of English settlers. If despite that, the Irish language and the Irish nationhood has survived today,

1. Wyn Griffith : The Welsh—Penguin Books, London.
2. Ibid.

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this shows how impossible it is to wipe these out. In this connection Prof. B. Kukarin observes :—

> "A population of six and a half millions in 1841 and only three millions on the eve of World War I—such is the dreadful tale of Irish statistics, a tale of gradual extinction and forced emigration on a scale unknown to any other European country in the last century. Ireland's population figures have now become stable, the emigration and the slow dying out has ceased, but the nation has only just begun to recover its vitality.....Irish intellectuals are now adopting their native tongue. Books are printed in Erse so are parts of newspapers, while official documents are now issued in both languages"[1]

Even where centuries of effort has succeeded in wiping out a language, the people do not generally surrender their entity and sense of separateness. Scotch-Gaelic has virtually become extinct but not the struggle for nationhood among the Scots. The dramatic stealth of the Stone of Destiny from under the British throne suddenly drew the attention of the world to this some years ago. Dr. John MacCormic has recently drawn attention to the great influence the Scottish National Movement commands in Scotland.[2] Mr. Ritche Cadler writing on "Scotch Renaissance" observes :

> "This Scots' resurgence which found expression in that remarkable manifestation, the Scottish covenant, which about half the voters of Scotland signed, is a factor too general to be ignored. .....The Scots point with a great pride to the new 'Renaissance' in the cultural field."[3]

It has been seen previously that it was not the dialect of London which superseded other dialects of the English language. London kept sucking in people from all dialect areas for some centuries and it merely acted as a crucible where those dialects commingled and historically evolved into the English language. The above references to Welsh, Erse and Gaetic would show that where for some reasons a 'dialect' or a language could not partake in this commingling, it continued to develop separately resisting all efforts to wipe it out. Even where these attempts succeeded, the people continue to cling on to their distinct entity. A study of the Gullah dialect of American-English shows that Negroes in U.S. even after forgetting their

1. The Emerald Isles—New Times, Moscow, September 22, 1955.
2. Dr. John Mac Cormick : The Flag in the Wind : The Story of the National Movement in Scotland—Gollanz. 1955.
3. New Statesman and Nation, London—March 17, 1951.

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original tongue and even after two centuries of 'bleaching' persist in using the grammatical forms of the African language of their ancestors, such as the omission of verbs from a sentence.[1] It has been shown by many sociologists that the American immigrants become "uprooted" and "alienated" when they begin to give up their own language in favour of English.[2] Bernard Shaw's well known remark that the English language divides the English and the American people is not a mere witticism. In his preface to "American Into English" Mr. Carey relates[3] how he has been mainly occupied with correcting proofs of some hundreds of books mostly by Americans. Here he has collected and analysed examples of current American 'parlance' which would have to be altered in order not to look strange in English. Despite all the intimate contacts that are today possible between the English and the American people, if their languages can tend to drift apart in the course of two centuries, no wonder that the languages of the peoples of the Hindustani area, who have been living in their respective territories for over two millenniums, have been growing in their own way.

It is equally incorrect to compare Modern Hindi with Russian. The people and languages of the Hindi region should better be compared with the Slavonic people and languages. Most of the Slavonic tongues which are today universally recognised as separate languages were considered mere 'dialects' only a few decades ago ; and time and again heads were dismally shaken in regard to their future. Before the Russian Revolution not only Czarist Government, but the ruling classes of all the Slav countries, believed in and actively strove for a Slav 'nation' and the necessity for a common language for the whole of this Slavonic group of nations was stressed again and again. Not a few Slav languages were treated as non-existent. These included languages like Ruthenian, spoken by about two crores of people. Tomitschek, a famous Czech politician, wrote in 1872 : "We Slavs are the mightiest stock in Europe.....A common language is, therefore, our most pressing need."[4] One Slavonic Congress after another "solemnly announced" their "conviction of the absolute necessity of selecting one of the Slavonic tongues as the common language of all Slavdom."[5] Dictionaries of the various Slav languages were scanned to show that they were mere dialects. They could "prove" a surprising similarity among them. Many of these

1. L.D. Turner : Africanism in the Gullah Dialect.
2. Cf. Oscar Handlin : The Uprooted ; Carl Sandburg : The Lonely Crowd.
3. Quoted from Stephen Spender : The Making of a Poem.
4. Carl Abel : Linguistic Essays. Cf. Essay on the Possibility of a Common Literary Language for the Slav Nation." 5. Ibid.

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languages had not come into their own till the First World War and some of them were so dormant at the time of the Russian Revolution that the Soviet Government was accused of digging them up. While emphasizing that "Velikirussi (Great Russians) were a kin to the Ukrainian and Byelorussian people in origin, language and culture"[1] the Soviet Government also insisted that this should not be mistaken for identity. The Northern Indian languages are being treated as one and the same on the basis of a similar kinship. The languages of the Hindi region possess the same deep affinity with one another as have the Slav languages and even though some of them are in a dormant condition like many Slav languages before 1917, they are bound to come into their own. The one advantage the Northern Indian people have over the Slav people is that they have been bequeathed, in addition to their colloquial speeches, a non-colloquial language soaring above them, which would make the evolution of a common colloquial language in the course of the next few centuries easier than elsewhere.

Modern Hindi is more like the "Church Slavonic" than the Russian language. Both "Church Slavonic" and Russian originated from the "Old Bulgarian" which was akin to the languages spoken by the tribes on the river Volga. The Russian language continued to be permeated by the rich and varied languages of the people and has never differed from the popular speech as is the case with many languages.[2] The Church Slavonic, on the other hand, cut itself off completely from the popular speeches. The more it began to be used exclusively for Church services, the more it became differentiated from the language of the people. After the transfer of the seat of learning from Kiev to Moscow, the Russian language began to come into its own and in the 18th century it asserted itself as a literary language making the former stilted book language, somewhat like our High Hindi, completely obsolete.

Before the Russian Revolution there were some Russian and other writers who wrote in the "Church Slavonic" and not in their mother tongues. Hardly three centuries ago most of the English writers wrote in Latin or French. Although *romanceiro* in the Portuguese language were for centuries popular throughout South-West Europe, the language itself was till recently merely regarded as a branch of the "Latin of Spain." Nearly every Portuguese author of renoun from 1450 to the 19th century wrote in Spanish and some like Jorge de Mutemer and Manoel de Mello produced masterpieces in that language and are regarded

1. Cf. History of USSR Vol. I :—Foreign Languages Publishing House, Moscow.

2. Anna H. Semeonoff : A New Russian Grammar.

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Spanish classics. If the Hindi writers today write in a language which is not their colloquial speech it does not mean that their mother-tongue has been superseded by Hindi.

Reference is also made to the 'replacement' of Provencal by French. It is not accepted by many that the Provencal language has disappeared completely. Moreover, the suppression of the Provencal language was not merely the result of the emergence of Paris dialect as the basis of French language. In the eleventh and twelfth century Provencal emerged as a great language of the heretical and humanist version of Christian theology. "Holy Wars" were incessantly carried on against these Albigensian, Waldensian and similar humanist heresies. Northern armies again and again marched against them and the entire land was laid waste in the Crusades of 1209 and 1244.[1] Similar Crusades against *bhashas* will be necessary if these are really to be superseded by Khaṛi Boli Hindi.

During recent years anti-war and progressive poetry of a very high order has been written in some dialects of South-West France, of which 'Provencal' was the ancestor. Another language, Yiddish, has come to life as a vigorous language of literature during the last few decades. Referring to the flowering of Yiddish as a literary language a well known Yiddish writer, Nathan Ausubel remarks :

> "Yiddish had served as the work-a-day language of the people. It was 'good enough' for use in ordinary intercourse and in buying and selling, but it was regarded as too defiling for literary expression. For that exalted purpose only sacred Hebrew was appropriate. Jewish literature was a middle-class movement so far, and the Hebraists, regardless of their fine literary achievements, evidenced the same kind of intellectual snobbery which makes the upper class Hindus today write in Sanskrit(ized Hindi) and not in the Vernacular Hindustani.....Yiddish was slandered and ridiculed by the Hebraists as an ugly-sounding jargon and as a disagreeable reminder of Jewish ghetto backwardness and degradation.....Fortunately, other and even more powerful historical forces were at work at the same time. The revolutionary struggle against absolutism, the rise of a large jewish proletariat, the widespread poverty and rootlessness among the lower middle classes—all these were provocative factors in favour of a Yiddish literary renaissance."[2]

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1. Cf. Sidney Finkelstein : How Music Expresses Ideas—International Publishers, New York.' Also, A Short History of French Literature : Geoffrey Bereseton—Penguin Books, London.
2. 'The Language of Sholem Aleichem'—The New Masses, New York, November 26, 1946.

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The Arabic language of over 4 crores of people in Western Asia and North Africa has over half a dozen "dialects" which differ less from one another than do the "dialects" of Hindi because of the deep influence Classical Arabic has been exercising for centuries over the Arab masses as the inevitable language of their religious life. Despite that these "dialects" of Arabic are treated as separate languages and people speaking them as separate nations.

Some seek to support the claim regarding the colloquial nature of Modern Hindi by the analogy of the Chinese language. It is stated that China like India had an "Asiatic-Feudal" society and that Hindi developed into a "national language" for the entire Hindustani people in the same manner as Mandarin developed as the national language of the Chinese nation—the entire Han race—constituting nine-tenth of the population of China.

Firstly, it is now coming to light that the Chinese feudalism was on a very much higher technical level than elsewhere in Asia and Europe. The great contribution of Chinese technique to the making of Modern Europe has already been referred to. The difference between the Indian and Chinese civilizations is fully brought out by the last address of Hsuan-Tsang in the course of his discoures with the monks of Nalanda on the eve of his departure from India. Referring to that, Grousset remarks :

> "With what verve in this speech, Chinese precision, scientific spirit and organisation are opposed to the political incapacity and pragmatic indifference of India."[1]

Comparing the Chinese and Indian people Kenneth Scott Latourette observes :

> "In spite of all surviving variations in race, the great mass of the Chinese people is remarkably homogeneous in physical appearance and culture. The differences are neither so marked nor so numerous as are those in Western Europe, in the Near East or in India.
>
> "The approach to uniformity is probably due chiefly to the type of government and culture under which the Chinese have lived. The political structure of the Empire, made up largely of a bureaucracy educated in the orthodox philosophy of the state, and inculcating conformity to this philosophy welded the people into a cultural whole. Political unity favoured movements of the peoples within the Empire. Some of these were engineered by the State—as for example the extensive colonization and forced migration under the

1. *Sur Les Traces du Bouddha* ; quoted by J. Needham in Science and Civilization in China, Vol. I.

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Ch'in and the Han. Others were entirely voluntary and often took place on a large scale in times of famine, when thousands of refugees fled from their old homes in search of food. The absence of marked differences of caste and the principle of recruiting the powerful official class on the basis of worth as disclosed in the civil service examinations and not on that of birth helped to produce a more or less fluid society in which wide inter-marriage was comparatively easy. The long established custom that no man could marry a bride of his own family-name operated in the same direction. Conquerors were usually assimilated fairly promptly. This was in striking contrast with India, where caste lines tended to keep races apart and to preserve blood distinctions between the successive waves of invasion. The political unity of China during a large part of her history and the consequent absence of internal political barriers to migration within the Empire also made for uniformity—in contrast, for example with Europe. As a result, no other group of mankind anywhere nearly equal to the Chinese in numerical strength, approximates it in homogeneity."[1]

Secondly, the Chinese language is not claimed as the colloquial speech of entire Chinese or Han people of which it is the national language. Every work on the Chinese language and culture refers to the marked linguistic differences between the various parts of China.[2] Starting from the province of Kwantung in the south where the Cantonese and further interior Hakka dialects are spoken and proceeding northwards we pass in succession the following dialects—Swatow, Amoy, Foochow, Wenchow, Ningpo and Wu. Further north the Mandarin (*Kuo yu* or 'official language') has also several dialects of which the dialect of Peking is now the standard form. Referring to dialectal variations in China, J. Needham observes :—

> "Another important aspect of the human geography is the fact that in this south-eastern area a multitude of mutually incomprehensible dialects are spoken. The two principal cities of Kukien, Fuchow and Amoy, for example, each have their own.....Thus Chekiang has a number of so-called Wu dialects, Fukien has many more and then further round the coast comes Cantonese—all entirely dissimilar to *Kuo yu*."[3]

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1. Kenneth Scott Latourette · The Chinese, Their Culture and History—Macmillan, New York.
2. Cf. C. P. Fitzgerald : China a Short Cultural History ; and Marcel Granet : Chinese Civilization.
3. J. Needham : Science and Civilization in China Vol. I.

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The fact of the Chinese national language being different from the colloquial speeches in some parts of China is of much less significance in China than elsewhere, because of the uniqueness of the Chinese languages or dialects and the uniform non-alphabetical script in which all these are written. All the dialects of the Chinese language are (1) mono-syllabic, that is each individual word consists only of one syllable and (2) they are strikingly poor in vocables or separate sounds for the conveyance of speech. In the vernacular of Peking the number of vocables is as small as 425. This resulted in the replacement of many of grammatical elements, which elsewhere serve as classifiers, by tones which went on increasing in the course of centuries—there are as many as eight in Cantonese. This has served to reduce the grammatical complexities which mainly create linguistic differences elsewhere. An ideograph used for a noun, is quite capable of being interpreted also as a verb, an adjective or an adverb just according to the context. No such grammatical devices as *e.g.*, verbs, conjugated according to person and number, exist in this language. The unique nature of the Chinese script, which has remained ideographic as opposed to alphabetic and has developed as such during the last three thousand years, has served to eliminate linguistic peculiarities in the written language. When the objects are to be written as they are seen and not as they are spoken, it can be possible to write these in a uniform manner while speaking in one's own way. If 'dawn' is to be indicated by sun above the horizon, 'jungle' by two trees side by side, 'tongue' by mouth with something coming out of it, 'word' by vapours or breath coming out of mouth, 'speech' by words and tongue, 'bright' by sun and moon combined, 'good' by woman and child, 'masculinity' by field and strength, 'home' by a pig under a roof, 'peace' by several persons or a woman under a roof, 'friendship' by two hands, 'clan-name' by woman and birth, 'lift' by rise, descend and machine, 'parliament' by discuss, govern and gathering, and so on, no wonder all the variations in pronunciation and the few grammatical elements which have survived in Chinese have become of little significance. In view of the above Chinese is the last language the evolution of which can be considered analogous to that of Hindi.

Apart from other factors, the very character and the role of the *mandarins* and the *brahmins* were different. It is not difficult to imagine what a difference it would have made to the linguistic geography of India if the *brahmins* had taught Sanskrit to the masses of the Indian people, instead of preventing them from even listening to it, if they had modified it from epoch to epoch so as to keep it near the spoken languages, instead of fixing it up irrevocably about three millenniums ago and if they had filled their ranks from the ablest sons of all classes, groups and areas,

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instead of getting sealed into the most closed and exclusive group in human history.

It can be misleading to draw analogies between languages without reference to cultural peculiarities, because a language is prone to be influenced by these peculiarities much more than other aspects of our intellectual and social life which generally go to make superstructure. Language unlike the superstructure extends from one basis to the other and does not change when one basis is replaced by another. The cultural and spiritual peculiarities of a people born out of their material and geographical conditions, therefore seep much deeper into the language than they do into religion, customs, social habits, etc.

The Indian philologists should first apply to their study the laws of philology universally held valid—that modern languages emerged through the coalescing of smaller into bigger ones and not by the splitting up of bigger into smaller ones, that national language on a scale as vast as the Hindi area could come into existence only through integrative forces working on a correspondingly large scale, that colloquial languages exist only in one form, that languages resist suppression or forcible assimilation and that colloquial languages do not emerge suddenly nor can they have a new grammatical system or stock of words. These languages rather result from a slow process of crossing lasting over several centuries in which basic vocabulary and grammatical system of one emerges victorious and around the stem of which the best elements of the defeated languages gather and concentrate. Only after the evoluion of Modern Hindi has been studied in the light of the above scientific laws, can it be profitable to compare and contrast it with languages in other parts of the world.

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CHAPTER NINE

THE REGIONAL LANGUAGES OF THE HINDI AREA

A language possesses great stability. It has such a tremendous power of resistence that it is impossible to impose another on it or to forcibly assimilate it. It is so, because language is the natural outcome of life itself and life having produced it continues to nourish it. It is wrong to think of a language as something independent and transcendent, existing apart from the people who think and speak it. Its roots go deep into the consciousness of each one of them. The truth is that a language is nothing but life at work—life in action.

It is universally admitted that the masses speak their dialects and *bhashas*. At least ninety per cent of them have never in the whole of their lives heard, much less spoken, even a single sentence of Modern Hindi, their life continues to be so much circumscribed by feudalism. The colloquial speeches are most directly connected with their daily toil, with all their activities and with all the spheres of their living. Their community of life is being continuously enriched and developed through these languages. How impossible it is to supersede or wipe out languages, so deeply rooted in the soil, would be borne out by two examples.

The Census Commissioner, Baroda (1931) pointed out that only where the members of a tribe had no economic independence and no roots in the soil, their 'Hindu-ization' involved loss of tribal language. While Gujerati is rapidly supplanting the *Bhili* dialect of *Bublas*, labourers completely dependent upon Gujerati-speaking masters, it has almost left untouched the language of *Chodras*, because of their economic independence and direct productive activity on land. Similarly, *Brahui*, a Dravidian language spoken by a little over two lakhs of people in Baluchistan has survived Aryanisation for over two thousand years.

No wonder, the languages like Braj Bhasha, Avadhi, Rajasthani, Bhojpuri, Bundelkhandi, Maghadi and Maithili, each a mother-tongue of crores of people, most directly tied to soil, continue to live and thrive. These languages have throughout continued to be the mainsprings of the finest poetry that has

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been written in Northern India during this period. In Avadhi alone we have during the last two decades or so poets like Balbhader Dikshit Prees, Vanshidhar Shukla, Dwarika Prasad Misra, Ramai Kaka, Dayashanker Dehati, Toran Devi Shukla, Brajnandan, Shiv Dularey Tripathi, Lakshman Prasad Mitra, Anup Sharma, Sharda Prasad, Lakshmi Shankar Misra Nishank, Badri Prasad Pal, Sumitra Kumari Sinha and others,[1] only their Avadhi writings do not now find any place in the histories of Hindi literature, as is the case with writings of the earlier period. Referring to the poetry of Balbhader Dikshit Prees, Dr. Ram Bilas Sharma describes him as an eminent poet and states that his poetry has acquired great beauty under the influence of Tulsi's *Ram Charit Manas*.[2] Great works of prose are also being written in these *bhashas*. Braj Bhasha can claim many recent works on history and culture. Well-known writers like Rahul Sankrityayana and Nagarjuna also write in their mother-tongues. The short stories in Maithili, particularly those of Manmohan Jha, have received wide appreciation through their translations into Hindi.

Shri Satyendra referring to Braj Bhasha, states : "Some people have begun to think that Braj Bhasha, bereft of its former glory, has become poor. Braj Bhasha is as alive today as it was at the time of Sur Das. Today also the language possesses the same power of expression. Is there a language which can equal it in sweetness ?" Similar opinion has been expressed in regard to their own *bhasha* by the other contributors to *Hindi ki Pradeshic Bhashaen*—"The Regional Languages of the Hindi Area"[3] In recent years many histories of language and literature of these *bhashas* have been brought out, all maintaining the separate entity of these languages and contesting that these are dialects of Hindi. Referring to the same Mahapandit Rahul Sanskrityayana observes : "Among the languages of the 'Hindi Area,' Braj, Rajasthani, Awadhi and Maithili have been literary languages from very early times and as regards the other languages, too, we cannot dismiss them as dialects for the simple reason that they donot have any body of written literature. We cannot do so because they are capable of expressing all kinds of emotions and nowadays their literature has also begun to be created."[4]

In fact recognition of these *bhashas* as separate languages is not a new phenomenon. A.F. Rudolf Hoernle drew attention to

1. Cf. Triloki Narain Dikshit : Avadhi Aur Uska Sahitya—Rajkamal Prakashan, Delhi.
2. Quoted in Ibid.
3. *Hindi ki Pradeshic Bhashaen*—Publications Division, Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, Old Secretariat, Delhi.
4. Rahul Sankrityayana : The Language Question—Indian Literature, Bombay, No. 3 of 1953.

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this more than 75 years ago. Referring to Eastern and Western Hindi, the names given to the languages of Northern India, he observed : "The terms are not good ones, as they give too much of an impression that Western and Eastern Hindi are merely two different dialects of the same (Hindi) language. In reality they are as distinct from one another, as Bengali in the east and Panjabi in the west, are supposed to be distinct from what is commonly called Hindi. Indeed the likeness between Eastern Hindi and Bihari is much closer than between Eastern Hindi and Western Hindi ; and on the other hand, the affinity between Western Hindi and Panjabi is much greater than between Western Hindi and Eastern Hindi. In short, Western Hindi and Eastern Hindi have as much right to be classed as distinct languages rather than different dialects, as Panjabi and Bengali."[1] Referring to the same two decades later, Grierson maintained : "Bengali is much more nearly related to and much more like the Bihari dialects, than they are to the Hindi dialects ; and vice versa, Panjabi is much more nearly related to and like the Hindi dialects than they are to the Bihari. It, therefore, follows as a necessary logical sequence that if Bengali and Panjabi are to be considered as languages independent of Bihari and Hindi groups of dialects respectively, much more must these Bihari and Hindi groups of dialects be considered as languages independent among themselves and each other."[2] Both Hoernle and Grierson described in detail grammatical differences such as in pronunciation, derivation, inflexion, construction, vocables, etc., between the languages of the Eastern and Western groups of Hindi to prove their point.

Subsequent studies even by orthodox Hindi writers have continued to emphasize the grammatical differences between the various regional languages of the Hindi area. It has been recognised that Hindi is nearer to Panjabi than to Avadhi or Bihari. Dr. S.K. Chatterji rather thinks that the Panjabis being virile people, it is "their influence which makes Hindustani, the most virile language of Northern India."[3] Sri Ayodhya Singh admitting that Hindi means one thing according to linguistic science and a different thing according to literature observes : "Though like Bengali and Oriya, Bihari is also derived from Maghadi (Prakrit) yet for many reasons (not mentioned) it is rightly considered Hindi."[4] In the same connection Dr. Shyam Sunder Das states : "Avadhi and Braj are both literary dialects and do not belong to the same family as Hindi but they are

1. A. F. Rudolf Hoernle : A Grammar of the Eastern Hindi.
2. G. A. Grierson : Seven Grammars of the Bihari Language.
3. S. K. Chatterji : Indo-Aryan and Hindi.
4. Ayodhya Singh : *Hindi Bhasha Aur Sahitya ka Vikas.*

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still considered as of that family but Gujarati and Rajasthani though from dictionary and grammar points of view are literary dialects of Hindi, they are still not considered to be of that family."[1] The Introduction to the *Hindi Shabad Sagar*—the greatest Hindi lexicon prepared by some of the most eminent Hindi scholars under the auspices of *'Kāshi Nāgrī Prachārni Sabhā'*, gives details of marked grammatical differences among the *bhashas*, without of course drawing the inevitable conclusion. The grammatical differences given in that long Introduction, for example, between Avadhi, Braj and Khaṛi Boli, will bring home to anyone that these three are distinct languages.

It yet remains to examine the arguments which have been put forward in support of the contention that people of the Hindi region constitute one Hindustani 'Nation', with a single colloquial language—Hindustani or Hindi—as their mother-tongue. These arguments[2] are as follows :—

(*i*) Urban middle classes of the towns in the Hindi area have close economic ties and as a rule speak Hindi or Hindustani. Marriages between young people of the Braj, Avadh and Bundelkhand areas are quite common in the middle classes and few, if at all, think that they are attempting inter-nation marriages.

(*ii*) Writers who speak Braj Bhasha or Avadhi at home all write in Khari Boli in its Hindi or Urdu form.

(*iii*) The working class, especially the industrial proletariat, by no means conforms to the dialects as spoken by the peasantry in their various areas and use Hindi or Hindustani as their common speech.

(*iv*) About 90% of the vocabulary of the *bhashas* is common.

(*v*) Newspapers, magazines, handbills, posters, are printed in Hindi in all these areas and none has felt the need to bring them out in the *bhashas*. In common environments all take to one language which is none of the *bhashas* but Khaṛi Boli or Hindustani.

(*vi*) Modern languages arose in the beginning of this millennium when we do not find any trace of these *bhashas*. These *bhashas* still have their dialects and there is no reason why all these should not be treated as dialects of Hindi.

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1. Shyam Sunder Das : *Bhasha-Vigyan.*
2. Most of these arguments are from "On the Language Question in India" by Dr. R. B. Sharma—The Communist, Bombay, September-October 1949.

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The middle class Panjabi Hindus in India and Muslims in Pakistan vehemently deny the independent existence of the Panjabi language and nationality. In response to the appeals from the Hindu-owned press and the middle-class leaders in the Panjab, almost the entire urban Hindu population in that state gave their mother-tongue as Hindi during the last Census (1951), most of these persons were unable to answer any of the questions put to them by the census enumerators in the most elementary type of Hindustani. In the Panjab (Pakistan) Urdu has officially been recognised as the language of the province and any mention of the existence of the Panjabi language is considered a treason.

Only a fraction of the men of letters in the Panjab write in Panjabi today and they are mostly Sikhs.[1] The Muslims and Hindus, with very few exceptions, and many Sikhs also write in Hindi or Urdu. Before Independence more students appeared at the Hindi and Urdu examinations of the undivided Panjab University than in all other Universities of Northern India at that time. Referring to the mother-tongue of a Panjabi Hindu Prof. O. P. Kahol, observes :

> "What should be the mother-tongue of a Panjabi Hindu be called ? He speaks what is properly called Panjabi and when questioned, he insists on and persists in saying that his mother tongue is Hindi. No amount of argument can make him see the truth."[2]

If the middle classes in the Hindi region are today more inclined towards Hindi than to their mother-tongue, the reason lies elsewhere and not that Hindi is their colloquial language.

Similarly, it is wrong to say that working people in the cities take naturally to Hindi or Hindustani. Workers from Avadh and Braj areas continue to speak their mother-tongues at home. It is a necessity that forces the working class to take partly to Khaṛi Boli in Kanpur and other town. After the first World War refugees from all parts of Eastern and Central Europe were noticed to have picked up working knowledge of French in no time after their arrival in Paris. When circumstances jettisoned them in the Parisians streets, they had to commingle, live with and understand one another. With the French they listened and could remember, they mixed some words of their own language or the language of their fellow refugees and so life went

1. S.K. Chatterji : "Barring a few Sikhs and others, most Panjabis employ Hindustani (Nagri-Hindi or Urdu)." (Indo-Aryan and Hindi).

2. Prof. O.P. Kahol : Hindus and the Punjabi State—Hindu Pracharni Sabha, Ambala.

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on uninterruptedly till they became familiar with the usual French of the street.[1] This process is easier in the streets of Kanpur because Hindustani is less distant from Avadhi and Braj Bhasha than French is from Eastern European languages. Before the establishment of Pakistan, many historical factors had similarly made Panjabi the common medium of communication in somewhat mixed cities like Srinagar, Peshawar, Quetta etc., without in any way advancing the claim of Panjabi over those regions.

Marriages in India are influenced more by religion and endogamous traditions than by the nationality. In this respect an aggarwala from Banaras will always prefer an aggarwala family of say Meerut to a non-aggarwala family speaking his own *bhasha*. Panjabi brahmins or jains have similarly preferred to marry outside Panjab than to marry in a non-brahmin or non-jain Panjabi family. This cannot, however, prove that there is a common colloquial language amongst the people of the entire Northern India. Similarly newspapers, posters, handbills, etc., are printed in Urdu or Hindi from Peshawar to Patna and from Srinagar to Indore and Hyderabad. All the Kashmiris and ninety-nine per cent of the Panjabis, who read newspapers other than in English, do so in Urdu, without in any way proving that their mother-tongue is not Kashmiri or Panjabi. The mixed speech of the cities and towns of Hyderabad State is Hindustani due to factors somewhat similar to those at work in the Hindi area. On this very plea, the Nizam was all these years denying the claim of the colloquial speeches in that State.

The kernel of the problem is the language of the peasantry, as language cannot be separated from the soil. The country-side is the guardian of the language as it is its creator. In this connection it is admitted by all that "the peasantry as a whole with few exceptions of the educated people among it, speaks the various forms of Avadhi, Braj Bhasha etc."[2]

As regards the argument that ninety per cent of vocabulary of the *bhashas* is common, it may be stated that this can be equally true about Panjabi and Bengali. Hindi can be translated into Panjabi by retaining 99% of the same words with minor modifications. In the Hindi-Bengali glossary of 300 words given at the end of '*Saral Bangla Shikshak*,'[3] all the words are the same or from the same roots. There is no point in losing sight of the separate

1. Cf. "The Street of the Fishing Cat" by Jolanda Foldes.
2. Dr. R. B. Sharma : "On the Language Question in India."—The Communist, Bombay. September-October 1949.
3. *Saral Bangla Shikshak* by Srigopal Chandra Chakravarty. 1933. Swayambhati Pustakalaya, Banaras.

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words these *bhashas* have, say for 'village', and picking up only the ones derived from the Sanskrit '*gram*'. This of course can prove what we want to, but will not take us nearer the truth. W. H. Fallon emphasized as early as 1870, that :

> "The most natural and expressive idioms are present in the spoken, not the written language.....Native scholars who plume themselves on their acquired literary language which distinguishes them from the masses, are commonly as ignorant as they are scornful of many a forceful and expressive phrases and idioms of the vulgar tongue which only await the appearance of some master mind who can discern the subtle affinities between the hosts of words that lie ready to hand... ...The fossil remains of a long extinct vernacular with the more recent unassimilated additions from the dead languages which constitute a large portion of Urdu and Hindi, are tame and colourless besides the warmth and glow of the living speech."[1]

Referring to the same Dr. Vasudev Saran Aggarwal observes :

> "The words of these *janpad bhashas* have a many-sided richness of meaning. The fascinating manner in which these words can give expression to feelings cannot be acquired by our heavy style of writing which can move along only with the crutches of Sanskrit."[2]

Stressing the separate entity of various 'regional languages' Dr. Amar Nath Jha stated in his Convocation Address at the Agra University in 1943 :

> "Hindi is not my mother-tongue. I stated this openly at the Abohar session of the Hindi Sahitya Samelan. The fact that Hindi is not my mother-tongue does not mean that I have nothing to do with Hindi."

In a letter to the editor, Madhukar, Dr. Jha expressed the opinion that it will be unreasonable to "disfavour" the use (for literary purposes) of Avadhi, Bhojpuri, Braj Bhasha, and Rajasthani.[3]

The grammar of a language is, moreover, of much greater significance than its vocabulary. The grammatical rules governing the modification of words and their combination into sentences give coherence and its distinct personality to a language. It is generally recognised that the grammars of these *bhashas* are

1. S. W. Fallon : Introduction to New Hindustani-English Dictionary : Lazarus & Co., Banares.
2. Letter to editor Madhukar—Madhukar, Janpad Andolan Ank, April-August, 1944.
3. Ibid.

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different. Even the words from the same roots have their own peculiarities in different *bhashas*. Referring to this Fallon observed : "The large number of Hindi words from a single root and their usually numerous secondary meanings testify to the vitality of the living root which continually throws out new shoots."[1]

The presence of dialects in a language does not nullify its existence. The circumstances under which the 'dialects' of the *bhashas* could not fully commingle and concentrate into the standard language, have been discussed already. A complete mixing up of 'dialects' does not generally take place without a complete reordering of society, resulting from the industrial revolution. In Northern India mercantile economy received an early set-back and there was a further consolidation of feudalism with the coming of the British. This made it impossible for the dialects or the languages of tribes and smaller nationalities to completely merge into the standard language. There is hardly an Indian language of today from Panjabi to Bengali and from Kashmiri to Malayalam which does not have dialects and *bhashas* are in no different position.

A study of the origin of the Panjabi language would show that circumstances were ripe for the sprouting of modern Indian languages only in the sixteenth century and then also on a scale not large enough for the whole of the Hindi region. The origin of the modern Panjabi language, too is wrongly traced to the eleventh and twelfth century.[2] At that time even the name 'Panjab' had not yet begun to be applied to the land of the five rivers. Al-Beruni referred to this land as *Panchnad*. With the coming of Muslims, Lahore became the capital town. Almost centrally situated between Eastern and Western Panjab it was, in the course of several centuries, able to help in the mixing up of the dialects of both the areas into one standard language. In his list of languages of India at his time, Amir Khusro mentioned 'Lahori', 'Multani', etc. The Sikh Gurus did not write in any standard Panjabi but in Hindvi, Old Hindvi, Sahaskriti, or in the various dialects of the Panjab. Guru Gobind Singh wrote also in Braj Bhasha. The writers of Jang Namas, and the Sufi poets similarly wrote in dialects or in mixture of the neighbouring ones. The trade route from Delhi to Kabul was now through Lahore instead of Multan in the south or Sialkot in the north. Under the Mughals Lahore further developed into a great centre of industry and trade. It eclipsed Multan and other towns as the market for horses and the shawls manufactured here were

1. S. W. Fallon : New Hindustani English Dictionary.
2. Cf. Payara Singh Padam : *Panjabi Boli da Itihas*, Manjit Publishing Co., Patiala.

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exported far and wide. Under the later Mughals, as the situation in the Deccan and the eastern provinces became more and more unsettled, Lahore became the most important city of the Empire. Thomas Moore in his famous poem *Lalla Rookh,* referred to the splendour of Lahore during those times. This commercial prosperity helped in the emergence of a standard speech out of various Panjabi dialects, which was described by Mohsan Fani in *Dubistan-e-Muzahib* (1645 A. D.) *as Zaban-e-Jatan-e-Panjab.* In the beginning of the seventeenth century Bhai Gur Das wrote his *waran* with many elements of this standard speech. Shortly afterwards came Waris's *Heer* which, basing itself on this standard Panjabi, drew upon several Panjab dialects and thus helped in the further development of Modern Panjabi.[1] Woven round a popular romantic tale it embraced all the castes, communities and classes. Sikh rule shook further the framework of feudalism and Lahore centrally situated gained greater importance. Under the British, Lahore emerged as one of the greatest administrative, educational, religious and cultural centres in India as the Panjab High Court and Panjab University grew in importance and as it more and more became the focal point of Arya Samaj, Sanatan Dharam, Anjuman-e-Hamayat-e-Islam and similar movements. This helped further in the spread of standard Panjabi to various dialect areas, which had never remained completely isolated as elsewhere, because of incessant invasions and immigrations from the west. The absence of an industrial revolution was partly made good by two factors—monopoly of service in the British Indian Army which brought together villagers from every part of the Panjab and large-scale settlements in the canal colonies of Central and Western Panjab of people belonging to the eastern areas. Despite all these factors there are still some areas which continue to retain their dialectal peculiarities. One of them Jammu has won recognition for its language *Dogri* and another Multan has advanced claim to a separate language.

Though standard languages began to sprout in the *bhasha* areas, simultaneously if not earlier,[2] than the Panjab, many of the factors at work in the Panjab were absent there. It is, however, noteworthy that integrative forces were too weak to weld all these diverse dialects throughout the length and breadth of Northern India into one language.

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1. Cf. Surinder Singh Narula: *Panjabi Sahitya da Itihas*; Sikh Publishing House, Amritsar.

2. There is no doubt that Bengali and Bihari languages arose earlier than others in Northern India because those areas were free from repeated destruction at the hands of early Muslim invaders. A Muslim chronicler of the 12th century, while referring to the low standard of living in the Panjab, the Khari Boli, Braj and Avadh areas, described Bengal as "a hell full of good things."

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There is as yet no unanimity of opinion regarding the 'dialects' in the Hindi region which deserve to be treated as independent languages. Grierson thought that the three colloquial speeches Magadhi, Maithili and Bhojpuri are mere dialects of a single Bihari language. These three intimately related colloquial speeches could have evolved a common standard speech but for the coming of the British. At least Bhojpuri, amongst these three languages, seems to have a strong case for independent existence,[1] the other two Magadhi and Maithili[2] are comparatively nearer to each other. Bagheli, a dialect of Avadhi, seems to have no claim to recognition as is sometimes asserted. Dr. B. R. Saxena observes that "Linguistically, Bagheli does not differ from Avadhi. In the *Linguistic Survey* its separate existence has only been recognised in deference to popular prejudice. The two characteristic points of difference mentioned in the *Survey*.....are found in other dialects of Avadhi as well".[3] Similarly, Malavi is sometimes claimed as a dialect of Rajasthani and at others as an independent language. In this connection, Shri Shyam Parmar remarks : "In fact, Malavi is a fully developed, complete, forceful and a wide-spread language. Those who regard it as a variety of Rajasthani are mistaken."[4] There is, however, no doubt that but for Rajasthan having become the main citadel of feudal interest under the British rule, the dialects of Rajasthani including Malavi would have merged into one language.

It, however, seems worth while to encourage as far as possible the process of the commingling of these dialects into *bhashas* which got arrested with the coming of the British. While giving the people the right to choose their own medium of cultural and spiritual advancement, it may not be necessary to go beyond the present number of *bhashas*, described as "the regional languages of the Hindi area". In this, the real wishes of the people should, however, matter as much as the actual stage to which the language or dialect has developed.

1. Cf. Uday Narain Tiwari : *Bhojpuri Bhasha aur Sahitya*,
2. C f. Jayakanta Misra : Maithili Literature. Referring to Maithili and Magadhi, Dr S. K. Chatterji observes : "In the evolution of at least two Modern Indo-Aryan sister-speeches in Bihar, the Maithili and the Magahi, there has been a very likely influence of the Austric (Kol) languages, which evidently were suppressed by the Aryan Magadhī Prākrit and Apabhraṁśa, in the peculiar device of pronoun-incorporation in the verb, which is so foreign to the nature of both Aryan and Dravidian"— "The Indian Synthesis, and Racial and Cultural Inter-mixture in India". 'The Indo-Asian Culture' Quarterly, New Delhi, Octobar 1954.
3. B. R. Saxena : Evolution of Avadhi.
4. Shyam Parmar : *Malavi Aur Uska Sahitya*, Rajkamal Prakashan Delhi.

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The development of these *bhashas* and their full flowering as literary languages will provide Hindi with an inexhaustible mainspring of the living idiom. These *bhashas*—Avadhi, Rajasthani, Braj Bhasha, Khaṛi Boli, Bundelkhandi, Bhojpuri, Magadhi and Maithili are in many respects among the most developed languages of the world. The inheritors of world's most ancient culture as these people are, their languages have acquired an unsurpassable maturity and richness. How great will the Hindi language become, if it begins to be watered by these perennial streams !

Mahatma Gandhi counselled Pandit Nehru to act upon the following advice whenever he was in doubt :

> "I will give you a *talisman*. Whenever you are in doubt, or when the self becomes too much with you, apply the following test. Recall the face of the poorest and the weakest man whom you may have seen, and ask yourself, if the step you contemplate is going to be of any use to him. Will he gain anything by it ? Will it restore him to a control over his own life and destiny ? In other words, will it lead to *swaraj* for hungry and spiritually starving millions ?"

Thinking of the poor peasant with whose toils and triumphs the *bhashas* are so intimately tied, it is not difficult to reach the right conclusion. Recognition of the *bhashas* side by side with Hindi will conform to the most profound aspirations of the masses and will unleash creative forces never known before in the long history of these ancient people.

History of culture tells us that, with the dawn of freedom, languages begin to enrich themselves with particular rapidity. After several centuries the peasant masses of India are awakening to a new life. The immense creative energies this will release can best be harnessed in their colloquial speeches.

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CHAPTER TEN

MARXISM AND THE HINDI LANGUAGE

The Marxist opinion in India seems to be sharply divided on the question of Hindi. As mentioned earlier Mahapandit Rahul Sankrityayana and Shivdan Singh Chauhan go to the extreme of maintaining that all the two dozen odd 'dialects' spoken in the length and breadth of Northern India should be given the status of 'national' languages. Dr. Ram Bilas Sharma and Ali Sardar Jafri, however, endorse the dominant view that Hindi (or Urdu) is the colloquial speech of the whole of the 'Hindustani area' and has developed into the 'national' language of the 'Hindustani Nation'. They accordingly advocate that this entire area should form a single state. They, however, think that Rajasthani, like Panjabi, is a separate language and that there is a distinct Rajasthani nation. Some time ago a long Draft Report entitled "On the Formation of the Hindustani Nation and the Problems of its National Language"[1] was published in support of that point of view "on behalf of the Central Cultural Commission of Communist Party of India."

Most of the arguments advanced in support of the view propounded in the 'Draft' have already been examined in the course of a general discussion on the subject. It now remains to be seen how far that view is tenable in the light of the Marxist classics.

The basis of that 'Draft' is that Urdu and Hindi are two forms of one and the same language—Hindustani—the national language of the 'Hindustani nation'. J. Stalin in "On Marxism in Linguistics"[2] stresses that a colloquial speech exists in one form only and that it is one single language serving the entire society and all classes including the peasantry. If any 'form' of that language arises which is not a single means of intercourse within that society, it is a mere jargon of some social group". One 'form of Hindustani', if not the both, has, therefore, to be accepted as a 'class jargon'. If Modern Hindi is accepted as the main language, and Urdu as a 'class-jargon',[3] the fact that Urdu is nearer to the

1. Indian Literature No. 1 of 1953, P.P.H. Ltd., Bombay-4.
2. Published in India by Tass, New Delhi.
3. S. K. Chatterji states in Indo-Aryan & Hindi—"Persianised Urdu inspite of Government support remains a class dialect to which three-fourth, perhaps four-fifth of India cannot give support."

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colloquial Hindustani or Khari Boli than Modern Hindi, will need an explanation. Shorn of the Urdu and Hindi vocabularies, Hindustani does not expand into the language of the entire Northern India but shrinks into the colloquial speech of the Khari Boli area only. The extent to which Hindustani is colloquial outside Khari Boli area, would be borne out by two examples. It was disclosed on the floor of the Bihar Legislative Assembly in April, 1951 that out of 1362 Government servants, who appeared at a test held to find out their knowledge of Hindi, all failed without exception.[1] The Report of Enquiry into the Allahabad Kumbh tragedy stressed the need for sign-boards etc. in a language intelligible to the people.

Much of the confusion of the present Marxist thought on the language question in Northern India can be resolved only by admitting the non-colloquial nature of Urdu and Hindi. Marxism has throughout been recognising the existence of such languages. In "Concerning Marxism in Linguistics" it is stated :

> "References are made to Lafargue and it is said that in his pamphlet "Language and Revolution" he recognises the 'class character' of language and denies the necessity of a common, national language. This is not true. Lafargue does indeed speak of a 'noble' or 'aristocratic language' and of the 'jargon' of the various strata of society. But these comrades forget that Lafargue, who is not interested in the difference between language and jargon and refers to dialects now as 'artificial language' now as 'jargon', definitely says in his pamphlet that 'the artificial language which distinguishes the aristocracy.....arose out of the language common to the whole people, which was spoken by bourgeois and artisan, by town and country."

Once the non-colloquial nature of the Modern Hindi and Urdu is realised, it becomes so easy to get over the contradictions which have been perplexing Indian Marxists about separate languages for the countryside and the towns and about Muslims taking more naturally to Urdu and Hindus asserting Hindi as the main instrument of their national awakening. It is not the language of the towns and of the middle and working classes that matters but that of the rural areas. That the national question is dominantly a peasant question and that the countryside is the guardian of nationality as well as the language, are the fundamentals of Marxism.[2] The origin of Urdu under Muslim influence is admitted by a Marxist as eminent as Syed Sajaad Zaheer who has

1. Cf. The leading article in Daily Sathi, Patna, April 14, 1951.
2. Cf. J. Stalin : Marxism and the Question of Nationalities—Peoples Publishing House, Bombay.

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shown in "Urdu, Hindi and Hindustani"[1] how Urdu came to birth "under Muslim influence" precisely in the area near about Delhi "of Muslim concentration both political and cultural".

Referring to Rajasthani Dr. Ram Bilas remarks :

> "There are linguistic areas where the creation of a single standard language has not been possible owing to the prevalence of feudalism. Such an area is that of Rajasthan where a number of allied dialects are spoken. Such areas are today being denied the right to develop their own language and culture and it is said that since these are only dialects which have yet to develop into modern languages, Hindi should be the language acceptable to the people of such regions."[2]

The above argument applies with equal force to other *bhasha* areas, where too feudalism has continued to prevail. The contention in the Draft that the Avadhi and other *bhashas* do-not exist because there are still dialects in those areas, is untenable.

The crux of the problem, however, is whether during the Mughal period mercantile economy and the urban trader and the bourgeoisie grew to such an extent as to bring about one of the most largely spoken languages in the world, the people of the Hindi area being over twenty crores in number. The Chinese national language, the only language of a larger population, is not, however, claimed as the spoken language of the entire Han race which owns Chinese as its language.[3]

A. Barannikov in the long Introduction to the Russian translation of *Ram Charit Manas* describes Tulsi's times as "the momentary respite in the five centuries old poverty of India." Referring to economic conditions under Mughals, Bhowani Sen states :

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1. S. Sajaad Zaheer : Urdu-Hindi-Hindustani (in Urdu)—Kutub Publishers, Bombay. Also Cf. The Historical Background of the Problem of Hindi-Urdu-Hindustani in Marxist Miscellany, Volume Four, 1945—Peoples Publishing House, Bombay.
2. Ram Bilas Sharma : On the Language Question in India—The Communist No. 5—Sept.-Oct. 1949.
3. C. P. Fitzgerald : "There are four main dialects (of Chinese) and innumerable local varieties.....An ideographic script being divorced from the sound of the spoken word, does not 'fix' the pronunciation of the language, which consequently changes far more rapidly and completely than in countries where an alphabetic form of writing is used"—(China a Short Cultural History).

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"This tyranny or Asiatic despotism of the 17th century was, however, upon a social background different from its European counterpart of the same epoch. England, for example was then passing through the rapid extension of money economy and commodity production, primitive accumulation of capital in possession of the trading class and the consequent growth of the new class, the bourgeoisie. From the sixteenth century onwards, renaissance backed by mighty peasant revolts on the continent of Europe, brought new enlightenment and new values in social relationship. The stage was thus being set for an industrial revolution and the development of capitalism. The feudal social order was thus undermined by new forces growing within its womb and in opposition to it.

"But in India—all the developments had been taking place within the frame-work of the Asiatic system which contained, among other features : unity of industry and agriculture (the peasant and the artisan was one and the same), the villages were almost self-sufficient units, the village communities, though they vanished from many parts of India, acted as a brake on social progress by preserving a self-sufficient economy. Even in those areas where the village communities lost the status, or, were not in existence, the tradition of isolation and self-sufficient economy continued, so that, though not, in the same form, the essence of economy of village communities was in existence. Despite the growth of money economy, despite the relative advance of commodity production and despite the emergence of feudal overlordship over the peasantry, the social base remained ossified ; the ancient relations, such as caste system, untouchability, tribalism of the oldest times etc., did not disappear but continued in the bossom of the unchanging village. Unlike the new tyrants of Europe, i. e. merchant adventurers, the greed of the Indian tyrants was not for money but for landed estates. Muslim rule did not and could not bring any fundamental change in the social order of a few thousand years."[1]

The above opinion of an eminent Marxist would show that such material conditions did not exist as could bring about the sprouting of national language on a scale as vast as the Hindi region. Standard colloquial languages could, in these circumstances, grow only on a much smaller scale.

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1. Bhowani Sen : Indian Land System and Land Roforms. P.P.H Ltd., New Delhi.

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The Indian Marxists should also consider, whether the 'Asiatic' feudal society was capable of producing a mercantile class fitted to play the role it did in Western Europe and whether the bourgeoisie could come to birth from the womb of such a society. It were the technical aspects of mercantile economy and improvements in the techniques of manufacture as much as in trade that brought to birth a new progressive experimental science to take the place of static science of the Middle Ages. In India as elsewhere in Asia, despite an early start, the progress in techniques came to a dead stop resulting in the formation of 'Oriental civilization' with a static technical level. In China this technical level was very high but even there the modern experimental science and the bourgeoisie did not emerge.[1] A reason specially applicable to China given by J. Needham is the rise of bureaucracy—the Mandarins—with a literary education, having no interests in improving techniques and being very concerned with keeping down the merchants, who alone could have driven techniques forward by opening up new markets. In India the *brahmin* caste, completely closed and hereditary as it was, did not have even the advantages of the Mandarin class of China, which recruited the ablest son of all the classes and groups through a fair competition. After the *vaishyas* had been reduced to the status of *shudras*, reference to which is available in Gita, the class struggle in India quite often took the form of the struggle between the *brahmins* and the *vaishyas*, the latter generally owing allegience to non-brahmanic religions, Buddhism, Jainism etc. and putting forward their own languages, Prākrits and Apabhraṁśas, against Sanskrit. The very concept of four varanas—*brahmins* as the priestly caste, *kshatriyas*, as the regal caste, *vaishyas*, as the trading caste and *sudras*, as the servile caste, went to pieces

1. J. D. Bernal: "The technical advances of the Middle Ages were made possible by the exploitation and development of inventions and discoveries which, taken together, were to give Europeans greater power of controlling and ultimately of understanding the world than they get from the classical heritage. Significantly, the major inventions—that of horse-collar, the clock, the compass, the sternpost rudder, gunpowder, paper and printing—were not themselves developed in Europe. All seem to have come from the East and most of them ultimately from China; from Europe came only alcohol and the clock.

"As we come to know more about the history of science in China,.....we are beginning to see the enormous importance for the whole world of Chinese technical developments. Already enough is known to show that the whole concept of the superiority of Western Christian civilization is one based on an arrogant ignorance of rest of the world. Transmission is always difficult to prove, but the fact remains that many inventions appearing only in the tenth century or later in Western Europe were fully described in China in the very first centuries of our era." (Science in History)

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as this class struggle between the *brahmins* and *vaishyas* and their *sudra* allies grew in intensity. Again and again the *brahmins* or the *vaishyas* and their allies emerged as kings and ruling chieftains. After Harsa's successful wars against the *brahmin* kingdom of Bengal and the later emergence of Gurjara-Pratihara empire, the *vaishyas* were coming on the top, but the coming of the Muslims again upset the balance in favour of the *brahmins*. The development of mercantile economy during the Mughal period has to be examined within the steel-frame of the Indian feudal society and the above socio-economic conditions which prevailed in India during those times.

The question now arises whether with the advance towards full political and economic democracy and the progress towards the human destiny of socialism, will the *bhashas* grow into maturity or move towards disappearance into the Khari-Boli-Hindi ? Modern history tell us that with every forward step of the people towards real independence and liberation, the 'embroynic nations' move not towards integration but towards continued and fuller maturation. According to Marxist teachings, when national oppression, existing throughout centuries, is replaced by full equality and deep friendship among the people, even the most moribund seed of nationhood begins to fecundate. In that period, language and culture will develop afresh. There will be no dying away of languages and their replacement by the language of the greater nation. J. Stalin said : "Who could have imagined that old tsarist Russia consisted of no less than fifty nationalities and ethnic groups." Referring to India he stated that "in case of a revolutionary upheaval in India many hitherto unknown nationalities each with its own language and its own distinctive culture will emerge on the scene."[1]

It appears pertinent to quote here what a famous American Marxist Mr. James S. Allen has said in connection with "Negro People as a Nation" :—

> "It is a grievous mistake to say that Negro people (in U.S.A.) are far less developed as a nation than other nations for whom Marxists justly demand self-determination. Furthermore, Marxists all over the world support the principle of self-determination of nations, at whatever stage of social development and whatever the level of national maturity, even if the development of a nation is very "embryonic" even if the national movement is now coming to life."[2]

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1. J. Stalin : Marxism and the Question of Nationalities, P.P.H. Bombay.
2. Political Affairs, New York, Dec., 1946.

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This takes us to the question of "one language one state", which has so much vexed Indian Marxists, Dr. Ram Bilas suggesting one state for the whole of Hindi area and Mahapandit Rahul recommending over a dozen. We have peculiarities of our own history and no theory, however absolute, can be put into practice in disregard of those peculiarities. Not only states outside the Hindustani area but those within that area itself will oppose the integration of all this territory into one state. It appears equally unnecessary to have a separate state for each *bhasha*. The Maithili, Magadhi and Bhojpuri people are likely to prefer to continue to live together in the State of Bihar as they are doing at present. This can be true about other *bhasha* areas as well. Only territorial adjustments may be necessary to bring all the people speaking a particular *bhasha* within the same state. Even in the U. S. S. R. itself there are some multinational states. The Russian Soviet Federal Republic has been described as a "union of nations inhabited by over 100 nationalities."[1] Moreover the circumstances which in U. S. S. R. necessitated the grant of complete self-determination to the extent of separation do not exist in Northern India. There is much deeper kinship among the various linguistic groups living in Northern India, which is further cemented by the existence of a common 'second language'—Hindi. Moreover, most of these linguistic groups are not so situated, geographically or materially, as to exercise the right of secession without which separate statehood and the right of self-determination implied therein are meaningless.

The Cultural Commission of the C. P. I., admit in their Draft that it is "necessary" to provide facilities for education to the people "at least in the early stages" in their *bhashas*.[2] It would be more democratic first to recognise the existence of these *bhashas* and then leave it to the people themselves to decide how much of their cultural needs can be met only through these mother tongues of theirs.

The Cultural Commission in their 'Draft' seek to prove something which Marxists throughout the world hold as untenable. Stalin in "On Marxism in Linguistics" emphasized that a colloquial language exists in one form only, but the very basis of the 'Draft' is that the 'national language' of the Hindustani 'nation' exists in two colloquial forms—Hindi and Urdu. Stalin maintained in "Marxism and the Question of Nationalities"

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1. Sixteen Soviet Republics, published by Soviet News, London.
2. On the Formation of the Hindustani Nationality and the Problems of its National Language—Indian Literature No. 1 of 1953.—P.P.H. Limited, Bombay-4.

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that "A nation is a historically evolved, stable community of language, territory, economic life and psychological make-up manifested in a community of culture" and that "It is only when *all* these characteristics are present that we have a nation." The Draft overlooks the historical and cultural peculiarities of the peoples of Northern India. It completely ignores the fact that nationalism is a matter of 'self identification' and none in Northern India identifies himself as Hindustani in this particular sense or emotionally and psychologically feels as Hindustani in the restricted sense of belonging to the Hindi area. The similarity and kinship among the people living in the Hindi area have been over-emphasized, forgetting all the time that these common factors also apply to the Panjabi and Rajasthani people, if not to the entire Aryan India. No wonder the same arguments are put forward by non-Marxists to show that there are no Panjabi or Rajasthani 'nations' or that the "disappearance" not only of Kashmiri and Panjabi but also of many dozen Tibetto-Chinese and aboriginal languages "is just a matter of time."[1]

Marx said that national languages arise "as a result of the *concentration* of dialects" and not through their suppression. Stalin observed in "The Future of the National Languages" that such a "policy of assimilation is unconditionally excluded from the arsenal of Marxism-Leninism as an anti-popular, counter-revolutionary policy, a pernicious policy."[2] The 'Draft' on the contrary maintains that the dialects of the Hindi area are in the process of being wiped out by Khari-Boli-Hindi.

Marx's reference about Avadh soldiery during the 'Mutiny' of 1857 having been welded together by a sense of national unity has been quoted in the Draft to prove that the people of Hindi area have developed 'national' unity. In the article 'The British Rule in India', Marx stated : "However changing the political aspect of India's past must appear, its social condition has remained unaltered since its remotest antiquity, until the first decennium of the nineteenth century." Palme Dutt has expressed a similar opinion in 'India Today.' The Draft, however, states that "In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries almost at the same time as in England and Russia, the national market of the Hindustani people was formed."

Only two members of the Cultural Commission have been referred to—Ali Sardar Jafri and Ram Bilas Sharma. Ali Sardar Jafri himself when pining for his 'motherland' during his incarceration in the Nasik Jail thought not of 'Hindustan' or 'Hindustani area' but of Avadh his native land. In one of his famous

1. S. K. Chatterji : Language and the Linguistic Problem.
2. Cf. Communist Review, London—July 1950.

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long poems he states how "he yearned to lift his mother, the beautiful land of Avadh, into his arms and to kiss and kiss her till her face shone bright".[1] Ram Bilas Sharma in a masterly article on Tulsi Das published in 1944[2] referred to the deterioration in economic conditions after Akbar and quoted eminent authorities on the subject in his support. Now in the Draft Report of the Cultural Commission he endorses a contrary opinion without giving any reason for it.

Nationalism as an attribute of the modern, capitalist epoch of history appeared in two different forms. The first form of nationalism appeared among countries like England and France which came to realise their nationhood under the impetus of their own economic and social conditions. These are the nations where the capitalist reordering of society completely wrecked feudal relations. The second form manifested itself among the countries which were forced into a conception of nationhood owing to national oppression by another state. People have been subject to alien rule since the beginning of history but a sense of nationalism arises among them only in the modern capitalist epoch of history. This has been aptly described with reference to Ireland by Walter Cramer. In this connection he observes : "England from Henry II onwards had aimed at destroying her (Ireland's) national individuality. Attempts were made again and again to suppress Irish speech and literature, Irish dress and, later, Irish religion also in the hope of laying a solid basis for English domination over Ireland. And yet we cannot speak of a national movement against English domination before the end of the eighteenth century.....Up to the final destruction of Irish tribal society under Elizabeth, the Irish opposition was led by tribal chiefs and their leagues. They, together with their peasants, did not fight primarily and consciously for national freedom." Later, the common struggle of the people in Ireland against subjection welded them into a nation even though they were then speaking two different languages—English and Erse.

In India feelings of nationalism came to birth under similar circumstances late in the nineteenth century as a result of the struggle for emancipation against the British who had by then conquered the entire Indian sub-continent. The common struggle of all the people of this sub-continent gave them a sense of oneness. The mobilization of masses against a common enemy gave them a cons-

1. Ali Sardar Jafri : *Nai Dunya Ko Salam*—Kutab Publishers, Bombay
2. "Goswami Tulsi Dass & Medieval India." Published in Hans, Benares.
3. Phases of Nationalism, Seen in Irish History—Modern Quarterly, London, January 1939.

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ciousness of 'nationhood' in a manner somewhat different from the nations of Western Europe. This has been mentioned in order not to deny the concept of India as a multi-national state but to emphasize that any discussion of the evolution of various 'nations' in India has to be within the frame-work of Indian unity. When Iqbal sang "*Sare Jahan Se Achha Hindustan Hamara*" he was referring to this common conception of Hindustan as covering the entire India and not merely Hindi of Hindustani region as specified in the 'Draft' of the Cultural Commission.

It has previously been mentioned that the people in North India, before the coming of the British, were historically, culturally, and emotionally evolving into homogeneous groups which embraced the people speaking one of the *bhashas* or Panjabi, Marathi, Gujarati etc. Another consciousness which people living in the north of Vindhyas had come to acquire was that of *Aryavrata*. This idea of belonging to *Aryavrata* soared above the clanish and tribal feelings before the rise of the *bhashas* and other standard or national languages in North India. This consciousness in *Aryavrata*, which was more powerful than the one in Europe, was not merely born out of a common history, similar religious beliefs, cultural affinity or the conception of *Chakravarti* of ancient kings and emperors. It was more a result of large-scale inter-mixing of people not only between the Indus and Gangetic valleys but also between the Gangetic valley and many areas of *Aryavrata* outside Hindi region. K.M. Panikkar points out that throughout "pressure from the Gangetic valley is dispersed and finds its line of expansion normally into Malwa and Gujarat and only to a lesser degree into Bundelkhand and other areas which have thus remained outside the main currents of Indian development".[1] This has undoubtedly made the consciousness of *Aryavrata* a greater spiritual reality than that of Hindustani or Hindi region.

Nationalism is essentially a matter of self-identification. There can be no two opinions about the fact that none in the Hindi region identifies himself as 'Hindustani' in the sense put forward in the 'Draft' of the Cultural Commission. 'Hindustan' previously meant the Khari Boli area only, later it came to mean the entire India and no consciousness of 'Hindustan' in the import given to it in the Draft has ever existed. Previously there was the idea of *Aryavrata* soaring above tribes and clans. This is how Rajashekhra in *Kavya-Mimamsa* (910 A. D.) described the country north of the Vindhyas. Later arose the consciousness of Braj, Avadh, Panjabi, Marathi, Gujarati, etc. which soared above feudal and tribal affiliations of the earlier period. If

1. K. M. Panikkar: Geographical Factors in Indian History.

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nationhood had grown in India in the same manner as in England France, etc., these people would have emerged as full-fledged nations. In India, however, the consciousness of nationalism came as a consequence of the mobilization of the masses of people against foreign rule. This is how all of them got imbued with the spiritual fact and the basic importance of nationhood. Though this retarded the full flowering of nations and national languages in many parts of India, it gave them a feeling of oneness, unity and consciousness of 'nationhood', which unified their struggle and made the achievement of the common goal of freedom easier.

Indian Marxists cannot seek to consider the nationalities and language question in India in disregard of the above facts of our history. These problems have to be discussed within the frame-work of Indian unity, otherwise it will be leaving the field free for chauvinism and reactionary nationalism to exploit these cherished sentiments. The idea of Indian unity as well as that of the national movement is now acquiring new and broader meanings. The concept of nationalism is now changing from the policy of national freedom to that of advance towards economic democracy and socialism. Loyalty to the Indian nation will more and more come to mean loyalty to the peasants and the poorer classes. This will make the *bhashas* emerge out of their dormancy. The common struggle of the Indian people for a better life will, however, further cement their unity achieved through the common struggle for freedom. In this march of the Indian people towards a new future, the consciousness of a separate nation of the Hindi area is sure to remain as non-existent as it has been in the past.

The latent possibilities of Hindi as a common heritage of the people of Northern India, if not of the whole of India, can be fully realised only after the *bhashas* come into their own. How great this heritage is, can be understood only if we think of the future as much as the present. As distances become less and less and as mankind advances towards the human destiny of socialism and towards consequent material and spiritual abundance, languages in various geographical regions and sub-continents will begin to come nearer and to coalesce. It might take Europe several centuries to evolve a stem around which the common language could grow and flower. The people of North India have been bequeathed a second language which has become theirs only a little less them the mother tongue and which can and will form the basis of the common colloquial speech of the future. Only through their most friendly co-operation and mutual give-and-take can this process be speeded up without deflecting from the right course.

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CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE QUESTION OF SCRIPT

The discussion regarding the merits and demerits of the Devanagari script shows no sign of abatement either in virulence or in volume, despite its having become the 'Official Script' in India by Article 343 (1) of the Constitution. The controversy between the Devanagari and Roman scripts[1] has now been joined by the Telugu script[2] which has been put forward as the one Indian script which can be made nearly as suitable for mechanical processes as the Roman.

It will be wrong to regard the script as extraneous to a language. An old script cannot be discarded and a new one adopted without correspondingly changing the very mind and soul of the language. The example is sometimes given of Mustafa Kamal Pasha of Turkey who replaced the Arabic script by the Roman. Apart from the fact that the Arabic script was not really native to Turkey, it should not be overlooked that in Turkey it was intended to have a radical break with the past and the change-over from Arabic to Roman script was both a symbol and an instrument of it. In India none contemplates any radical break with the past. Proud of the unexampled continuity of our culture as we are, we want to maintain it, and are most anxious to carry it forward and to enrich its finest elements.

Further, situated as the people in Northern India are, they are hardly likely to be affected by any change of the official script. Whatever the script at the official level, they will continue to cling on to the Devanagari, as they have done during all these

1. S. K. Chatterji. "In the matter of script our Government has declared the Indian script, the Devanagari, to be the proper and official script for Hindi, and has not given any official support to the Roman script. Nevertheless, there is a strong group, which, however, is not very active now but which has the tacit support of many scientific scholars, particularly in Bengal and sporadically in other parts of India too, which is in favour of a general acceptance of the Roman script for all Indian languages. I myself am connected with a *Roman Lipi Samiti*. a "Roman Letters Society" in Calcutta as its President"—(Indonesia's National Language—The Indo-Asian Culture, Vol. IV No. 2, October 1955).

2. Cf. Prabudha Nath Chatterji: National Script and Numerals—Calcutta Review, December 1954.

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centuries. Changing the script without the social conditions which can make such a radical change effective, will merely complicate the existing problem and may create many new ones. Only after industrialization has sucked out more than half of the present population from the rural areas, can there be any chance of the change in the official script being felt by the common people. The *Kaithi* script of the Maithili language has never been officially recognised and *Gurmukhi* script of the Panjabi language won official recognition only recently, but all through these centuries there has never been any abatement in those people's love for their script.

Similarly, advocating Roman script on the plea that it will help in the evolution of a common script for the whole of India is meaningless. There is at present not the slightest chance of the people speaking the various languages in India surrendering their scripts in favour of either the Roman or Devanagari. Much has recently been said about the acceptance by Urdu of the Devanagari script. The 'Draft' of the Cultural Commission of the Communist Party of India,[1] referred to in an earlier chapter, suggests that "the progressive intelligentsia should work actively for the acceptance of a single script—the Devanagari script." This is a euphemistic way of saying that Urdu script and the Urdu language should be surrendered by the Muslims, for here is the one sure case where the language cannot exist without the script. Similar advice has been given to the Muslims by others also. Dr. Amar Nath Jha, on the occasion of the Diamond Jubilee of the Kashi Nagri Pracharni Sabha, observed : "I am a well-wisher of Urdu and want it to flourish and to live on in the future, but I will urge upon the lovers of Urdu that in the existing circumstances, Urdu can survive only if it is begun to be written in Devanagari script."[2] Kaka Kalelker too has expressed a similar opinion.[3] It might be that in a century or two Persianized Urdu will be as much a thing of the past as are the Apabhraṁśas today. Enjoying no more the privileged position of a provincial language, as it did at many places before Independence, it is reverting more and more to its original position as the language catering primarily to the cultural needs of the Indian Muslims. So long as such a need remains, Urdu and Urdu script will be and should be preserved as provided in the Constitution of India. The question of a common script for Urdu and Hindi should not be confused with the problem of divesting Modern Hindi of its dominant artificial

1. On the Formation of the Hindustani Nationality and the Problems of its National Language—Indian Literature No. 1 of 1953
2. Cf. Rashtravani, Patna, April, 1954.
3. Cf. Editorial note in Avantika, Patna., May, 1955.

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elements or of making Hindi again strike deep roots into colloquial Khari Boli and its seeking sustenance therefrom.

There is no doubt that the Roman script is simpler and therefore more efficient than practically all the alphabets obtaining at present in India. The twenty-six symbols of the Roman script would mean great advantage for the printer, teacher and the young people. The printing in Devanagari and other Indian languages is no doubt at present more costly and elaborate than it is in the Roman script. The multiplicity and combination of symbols have truely made the Indian scripts very tedious to learn and to use. But cannot these scripts be simplified; and has any genuine effort at simplification been really made ? Cannot the combination of symbols—the *sanyukta-aksharas* and the use of vowels above and below the words be discarded ? Cannot the alphabet of Devanagari be reduced to less than 30 words while retaining the present extremely useful ten vowels as against the five of the Roman ?

Some of the arguments against the Devanagari and in favour of Roman script may now be examined. Dr. Suniti Kumar Chatterji[1] commenting on the two scripts observes :

> "In spite of all that can be said in favour of the Davanagari and against the Roman, however, I am convinced of the suitability of a re-arranged and modified Roman alphabet for our Indian languages, including, of course, Hindustani. My study of the question of "a Roman script for India", I have given in full in a paper published in the Calcutta University Journal of the Department of Letters Vol. XXVII 1935, and I do not want to repeat my arguments.....The Davanagari is at a disadvantage when we take into note the comparative intricacy or complexity of its letters, the use of conjunct consonants, and the syllabic and not purely alphabetical character of the writing...
>
> "At present to print in Davanagari considerably over 400 special types are required ; with this Indo-Roman, some 50 in all should suffice."

Mr. Madan Gopal mentions the following disadvantages of Devanagari :—

> Devanagari takes about 75% more space. It takes 50% more time to write. The salary bill of our Government will go up by 50%, the stationary bill by 75%. The price of books would go up by 75% which mean that all education

1. S. K. Chatterji : Indo-Aryan and Hindi.

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and culture becomes very much dearer. While writing the last chapters on Hindi it occurred to me that Devanagari not only took much time and space in writing but it also took a much longer time in reading. If by chance my last surmise is correct, the matter becomes extremely serious. It means not only loss of money but also great loss of time and consequently loss of culture."[1]

Sri Prabuddha Nath Chatterji, discussing the question of a common script for India, remarks :—

"But what sanctity is there about Devanagari ? Devanagari letters are formed—at least a majority of them—in an angular shape which prevent or retard rapid writing. The letters are not simple in form but rather cumbersome. Writing in Devanagari script tends to bring fatigue sooner—if the writing is at all careful and typical than writing in some other alphabets, as for example the Roman and the Telugu.

"If the Telugu script can be further simplified as regards the shape and system of the conjunct letters and by abolition of ornamental flourishes constituting upward and downward strokes, probably it will be made nearly as suitable for mechanical processes as Roman script.....A further consideration in favour of adoption of Telugu script to be the common script of India, is that this would probably promote and cement unity between the northern and southern portions of the country."[2]

The question now arises whether most of the defects of the Devanagari script referred to above can be removed or lessened by a simplification of the script. The lines on which such a modification towards simplification can be undertaken would be suggested by the very implications of the adoption of Roman script.

Firstly, the adoption of Roman script would mean the discarding of the combination of symbols totally. If necessary, these *sanyukta akhsharas* can be discarded in Devanagari thus saving much of the headache of the printer.

Secondly, signs of vowels used above, below, on the left and the right of words will have to be discontinued in Roman and in their places full vowels employed. If necessary this can be done in the printing of Devanagari ; thus off-setting all the advantages Roman script has over Devanagari.

1. Madan Gopal : This Hindi and Devanagari—Metropolitan Book Co., Darya Ganj, Delhi.
2. "National Script and Numerals" by Prabuddha Nath Chatterji—Calcutta Review, December 1954.

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Thirdly, there are no separate aspirated words for b, ch, d, g, j, k, p, s, and t in Roman script nor are there any words ; aspirated or unaspirated, for ṛ d and ṭ. In Indo-Roman script new forms for the latter three sounds will have to be fixed and their aspirates made by adding 'h'. The aspirated words can similarly be made in Devanagari by adding the *ha*. By thus discarding symbols for aspirated sounds the Devanagari alphabet can be reduced by twelve words. Similarly, one *na* can be retained in Devanagari (if necessary with a dot for the nasal *na*) and the other three discarded as in the Indo-Roman script. This would reduce the number of consonants in Devanagari to eighteen, which together with ten vowels, will make the Devanagari alphabet consist of a total of 28 letters as against 26 of the Roman script, which has only five vowels and none of the distinctive Indian consonants. The above modifications would give Devanagari all the advantages in printing etc., at present enjoyed by the Roman script.

Fourthly, the roundness of letters, the unbroken continuity in writing and other calligraphic advantages can be obtained by omitting the upper line of the letters and where possible the perpendicular line on the right of most of the Hindi letters. Omission of the perpendicular line on the right of letters would become quite easy after the discontinuance of *sanyukta akhsharas*. The half words used in joint letters can be used as full letters.[1] This would obviate many of the defects of Devanagari calligraphy.

It may not be necessary to adopt some of the improvements in printing in calligraphy also and *vice versa*. For example, the use of signs for vowels is a great convenience in calligraphy and may be discarded only in printing. The above modifications come to mind on a consideration of the commended change-over from Devanagari script to the Roman. A proper study of the subject will not only reveal many other possibilities of improvement but also that the Devanagari can be made as serviceable as the best scripts of the world. This calls for the setting up of a "Research Committee" like the one recently constituted by the Peoples' Republic of China for the reform of the Chinese national script.[2]

Telugu script could have remarkably served the purpose of an all-India script if it had been the single script for the whole of South India. There does not seem to be much substance in the contention that the adoption of the Telugu script

1. For example ह्न, ह्म, ह्य, ह्र, ह्ल, ह्व, ह्ह, ह्ण, ह्न, ह्म, ह्र, ह्ल, etc. can be used as full letters omitting also the horizontal line.

2. Cf. "The Problem of Reforming the Chinese Written Language."—Peoples' China, Peking, No. 10 of 1954.

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for Hindi would end the present language controversy in India because it is only one of the four scripts in the South. One of the drawbacks of Hindi today is that it has been tending to become more and more artificial since the beginning of this century. The only way to enliven it, so as to give it a colloquial character, is to make it drink deep not only from the fountain-head of Khari Boli but also from those of other related colloquial speeches of Northern India. The adoption of Telugu script for Hindi will merely render this impossible and will condemn Hindi to a permanent artificial existence.

In the long history of India Devanagari has not been the only script nor has it been there in all periods and for all the literatures of our ancient country. The Buddhist 'Lalita Vistara' mentions 64 scripts which were taught to Buddha and the list does not contain the names of Devanagari or the earlier Brahmi script. Jaisi wrote his 'Padmavat' in the Persian script and many other early Hindi works were not written in Devanagari. All the several hundred Braj Bhasha works in the archives of the PEPSU Government are in the Gurmukhi script. It is, however, undeniable that the Devanagari script is so inseparably bound with the present cultural accumulation of the people of Northern India that they cannot think of one without the other. There is, at present, no chance of their surrendering this script in favour of Roman or any other even if the Government decides upon it. The acceptance of this hard fact will bring to the fore the urgency of reforming and improving the Devanagari script in order to enable it to meet the challenge of modern life.

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CHAPTER TWELVE

THE FUTURE OF HINDI AND THE PROBLEM OF A STATE OR A 'NATIONAL' LANGUAGE FOR INDIA

The future of the Hindi language has several aspects, which though intimately linked with one another, have necessarily to be examined separately if the problem is to be salvaged from the confusion into which it is getting more and more deeply buried.

Firstly, there is the question of Hindi as a 'National' or State language for the whole of India and that of its status *vis-a-vis* the languages outside the Hindi region. The number of languages given in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution of India is 14. Of these Sanskrit is a dead language and Hindi and Urdu belong to the same region. There are thus eleven languages recognised for the various non-Hindi regions by the Constitution in addition to Hindi the 'official' language of the Union of India.

Secondly, there is the question of the relationship between Hindi and the *bhashas*—the colloquial speeches or 'the regional languages' of the Hindi area. We have seen previously that Hindi is not the mother tongue of the people living in the Hindi region. The recognition of *bhashas* as independent, though intimately related, languages of people struggling for the attainment of status as distinct 'national' groups, similar if not equal in status to others outside the Hindi region, will bring to the fore the question of drawing a line of demarcation between the *bhashas* and Hindi. There is no doubt that Hindi is nearer to these people than it is to the people elsewhere. It is equally incontestable that there are many cultural and social needs of these people which cannot be fully satisfied through Hindi only. Language is not only the product of a people's struggle against nature, it is also their weapon in that struggle, without it they cannot attain material and spiritual richness. Much more paramount than the need for communicating with people of other *bhasha* areas, is the perpetual necessity for these people to communicate with one another, to enrich, express and to carry forward their social commonness. Their rich universe of emotions and their creative tasks of productive labour will starve without these *bhashas*. At the same time, many people in the Hindi region have acquired a familiarity with Khari-Boli-Hindi which should necessarily be preserved and extended. The question is how can

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the *bhashas* and Hindi grow harmoniously and simultaneously to the mutual benefit of one another ?

Thirdly, there is the question of making Hindi progressively draw nearer the colloquial speech—Khari Boli or Hindustani—and of reversing the process which started in the beginning of this century, which has rendered Modern or High Hindi more and more artificial so much so that it cannot today be considered the colloquial speech of any people anywhere. An artificial language must eventually wither away and die. The future of Hindi, therefore, depends upon reducing its artificial elements and largely augmenting the colloquial ones. In fact, our very future as a free people and that of democracy in this country is intimately linked with this question. A language becoming more and more alien from the people is sure to become a powerful weapon in the hands of the enemies of people and already our cultural life is being turned into a desert through the increasing artificialness of Modern Hindi.

As an all-India language the position of Hindi as prescribed in the Constitution of India should be adhered to both in letter and spirit. The Constitution of India under Article 343(1) lays down Hindi as the 'Official language' of the Union of India and not as the national language of India. That the distinction between the 'National Language' and the 'Official Language' is not merely academic, would be borne out by the following letter to the Indian Express, Madras, by Krishnaswami Bharati, a member of the Constituent Assembly, which framed the Constitution of India :—

> "I read the article of Sri G. V. Mavlankar in your daily of the 19th instant under the title 'Hindi Pilgrimage to the South', with all the interest and attention that it deserves. Sri Mavlankar is an astute intellectual and is generally accepted as a well-informed scholar. I must, therefore, confess to a sense of surprise that he of all persons, should have made himself responsible for certain statements therein, which require correction in the interest of truth and knowledge.
>
> "Sri Mavlankar says that 'Hindi in Devanagari script has been now accepted as the national language by our Constitution'. May I point out to him in all humility that this is not a correct statement of fact ? The Constitution of India nowhere refers to Hindi as the national language. All that the Act says is that 'the official language of the Union shall be Hindi in Devanagari script'.
>
> "Need I hardly emphasize the vital difference between the word 'national' and the word 'official', both in its content

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and significance. As one who actively helped in the framing of the Constitution, I may say that we deliberately eschewed the word 'national' in reference to Hindi, as it cannot fit into the context of the scheme of the Act in as much as the different regional States are given the right in the Constitution itself to adopt, by law, one or more regional languages to be the official languages for the concerned States. With India presenting the ultimate picture of the different States adopting their own regional languages as the official languages of the respective States, Hindi can by no stretch of imagination be called the national language of India."[1]

Treating Hindi merely as the 'Official Language' of the Union of India will remove one of the causes of South India's increasing opposition to Hindi, but not all the causes. The people in the Hindi region seem to be totally in the dark about this ever-mounting opposition, which is not in fact limited to the South only. Failure to understand and to obviate its causes is doing incalculable harm to the country. This is merely serving to perpetuate the slavery of all of us to the English language.

Dr. C. P. Ramaswami Ayyar, Vice-Chancellor of the Annamalai and Banaras Hindu Universities stated before the University Education Commission that "A Madrasee will have to be taught through Tamil, Telugu, Kanarese or Malayalam. To him Hindi is as foreign as English, French or Russian. I can definitely tell you that you can never make Madras learn Hindi. This aspect of the question is not borne in mind by many who write on this subject."[2] Similarly, Dr. A. Lakshmanswami Mudaliar, Vice-Chancellor of the Madras University, observed in the course of a speech in the Madras Legislative Council : "I am unable to understand the anxiety of the Government of India to send 2000 Hindi pandits to South while it had done very little to give effect to the directive in the Constitution —the provision of compulsory universal free elementary education before 1960. If they were discarding English in the country, it was because it did not come naturally to the child. Was there any reason to feel that Hindi was more natural than English to the child of Tamilnad, Malabar and Andhra ?"[3] The mere suggestion to introduce Hindi as an optional medium for Union Public Service Examinations with effect from 1960 has raised a storm of opposition outside the Hindi region and it seems that it will not be easy to bring about the necessary change from English to Hindi within the stipulated period of fifteen years. What a harmful effect all

1. Indian Express, Madras. October 1. 1954.
2. Report of the University Education Commission, Delhi—1951, Vol. II, Part II.
3. Daily Statesman, New Delhi—August 6, 1955.

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this is having on our national life would become clear from the following statement by Mr. Hanumanthiah, Chief Minister Mysore, at Madras on Sept. 18, 1954 :—

> "After all, what we want is knowledge, enlightenment and liberalization of our minds and outlook. What does it matter, therefore, which language can get us these benefits ? And English—without prejudice to other languages—is one of the languages that can bestow these benefits on us.....
>
> "Now as we carry on through the medium of English, we do not think in terms of Telugu, Kannada or Tamil. We are made to think instinctively as Indians first and last, and to go a step further and that is the core of the philosophy imbedded in our Sanskrit texts also—we should treat the whole world as a family. If we develop that outlook we will also develop the spirit of tolerance towards the English language."[1]

It has been suggested as a solution of the problem that India should have two 'Official' languages—a Sanskritic language of the North and a representative of the Dravidian languages of the South. Commenting on this suggestion, Sri A. Senthamilan remarks : "The ideal solution would, of course, be to adopt all the principal languages spoken in India as 'Official' languages of the Centre. We have already seen how other multi-lingual states like Canada, South Africa, Belgium, Switzerland and nearer home, Ceylon and Pakistan, have adopted this obvious solution ; the last named country attempted to force a single language as the 'official' language, but the experiment proved disastrous and was promptly abandoned."[2]

It is of paramount importance that the unity[3] of India should be maintained voluntarily, that not the slightest ill-will or fear should exist in the minds of the people of any area and that the Indian people should achieve spiritual freedom from the English language in all respects without any further delay. If the acceptance of a South Indian language as a second 'official' language can help us to get out of the thraldom of English, this should be welcomed by everyone in North India. As none of the South Indian languages occupies a dominant position among the Dravidian speeches this solution, however, seems to be somewhat far-fetched.

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1. Quoted in 'Problem of a National or Official Language in India, Tamil Culture, April, 1955.
2. The Problem of a 'National' or 'Official' Language in India—Tamil Culture, April, 1955.
3. Chief Minister of Mysore, Mr. Hanumanthiah stated at a Press Conference on Aug. 23, 1955 : "Enthusiasts of Hindi go to the extent of forcing it to such an extent as to jeopardize the oneness of the country"—Statesman, New Delhi—Aug. 24, 1955.

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The best way to allay the fears of the South and to offset the handicap that the students of non-Hindi areas would suffer in the matter of Hindi as an official language is to make the knowledge of any one of the other Indian languages obligatory in all Central examinations where Hindi is made a compulsory subject. Every effort should also be made to make the knowledge of South Indian languages more common than it is today. At present even educated persons in North India do not know that there are four Dravidian languages and not just one 'Madrasi' language or that Dravidians constitute almost 30% of the Indian population. A way to the abiding unity of India and to the ending of the present enslavement to the English language has been suggested by the President of India, Dr. Rajendra Prasad, who opening the Hindi Exhibition at New Delhi on August 12, 1955, observed :

> "As a State language the use of Hindi will be confined to certain well defined spheres of activity, leaving the other languages to have full sway in their respective regions. The burden involved in learning the language other than one's mother tongue must, as far as possible, be distributed evenly among all the people of India. For the same reason I have often advocated that it is the duty of those whose mother tongue is Hindi to learn at least one regional language, preferably in my view a South Indian language.
>
> "I do not say so merely on sentimental grounds. Its practical utility is equally obvious. I take it that when the system of education at the various stages has been properly reorganized.....the study of regional languages will be encouraged as a second language at the secondary or university stage all over the country."[1]

Proper emphasis is at present not been given to the teaching of South Indian languages in the North.[2] This will have to be done before the shift-over from English to Hindi can be given effect to.

Nature has not destined India to be one country. This fact of physical geography is borne out by the political geography of India before the coming of the British. The present unity of India, however, is one of the few precious things left behind by the British. This cannot be preserved merely by the one way traffic of languages and culture from North to South which has so far been the feature of Indian history. South Indian

1. Daily Statesman, New Delhi, Aug. 13. 1955.
2. While 50 out of 65 colleges affiliated to Madras University are teaching Hindi as an optional subject, probably not a single college in the Hindi region has at present arrangements for the teaching of any of the South Indian languages.

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languages must now come on a pilgrimage to the North. History and culture of India as taught in the North will have to give proper place to South Indian history and culture. Most of all, the entire system of communications in India, set up by the British from the points of view of the defence of north-west frontier and maritime trade through Calcutta and Bombay, will have to be radically modified in order to offset the effects of India's natural features. Only through that can North and South come closer and Hindi really reach the South.

The substitution of English by Hindi as the official language of the Indian Union should not be rushed through against the wishes of the South Indians, though it should be as expeditious as possible. Hindi and other regional languages can, however, be immediately made the medium of University Education in their respective regions. Similarly, arrangements for teaching South Indian and other regional languages as an optional subject can be made immediately in all Northern Indian Universities. Everything should be done to allay the fears of the South so that Hindi can grow as the voluntary 'State Language' of this country.

The linguistic problem in the Hindi region and that of the relationship between Hindi and the *bhashas* is somewhat more complicated. Democratic revolution on land being as incomplete in Hindi region as elsewhere, it is the middle classes that matter and make their voice heard. The opposition of a middle class person of the Hindi region to the *bhasha* he speaks can be understood only if the parallel of the Panjabi middle class Hindu's dislike for his mother tongue is kept in view. Referring to that Prof. Om Prakasha Kahol, a former member of the Working Committee and the Central Parliamentary Board of the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, maintains :

> "The argument of the Panjabi Hindus, that by discarding the Panjabi language and by adopting Hindi as their mother tongue, they will become members of the 'privileged' class and their entry into the 'Imperial' service will be facilitated, clearly shows that certain advantages do accrue to the speakers of Hindi by the installation of that language as the Union language. The tendency to discard mother tongue in favour of *Lingua Franca* is not peculiar to Punjabis, but may be present and is discernible, to a more or less degree, among speakers of other languages also."[1]

The middle class Panjabi Muslims in Pakistan hate the Muslim immigrants from U.P. but own their language—Urdu—for it provides them with an instrument for dominating over other people in Pakistan. The reasons for the love for Hindi of a middle class

1. O P. Kahol ; Hindus and the Panjabi State, Ambala, 1955.

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Hindu belonging to the Hindi region are likely to be similar. His disregard for the *bhashas* is also born out of the fear that if these *bhashas* and consequently the people come into their own, he might not be able to enjoy the monopoly of the fruits of Independence as he is doing today.

Even those communists who are the only exponents of a single 'national state' and a single 'national language' for the people of Hindi region, concede that the *bhashas* should be the medium of education in the early stages. This will become all the more necessary when the directive principle of the Constitution that elementary education should be free, universal and compulsory is enforced. What would meet the need of the *bhasha* areas for the present, is that these *bhashas* should become the medium of education up to the primary or middle stage, in their respective territories, students having the option to choose *bhasha* or Hindi in the higher secondary stage. The university education throughout the Hindi region should, however, be in Hindi and not in English as at present. The Governments in the Hindi region should set up separate Departments for these *bhashas* like the Panjabi Department of the PEPSU Government and take up the task of publishing the extant literature in *bhashas* mostly lying in manuscripts. Several hundred works in these *bhashas* are lying unpublished. Misra Bandhu Vinod[1] gives their number as 3767. Grierson in the Appendix to his 'Modern Vernacular Literature' gives a list of several hundred such works. Many more must have escaped his notice. Many must also have been written in the course of the last half a century. To allow all this literary accumulation to be lost to posterity would be a crime against our own culture. Similarly, the Universities in the Hindi area should have the *bhashas* as an optional language, providing teaching facilities upto the highest standard. In one of the histories of Maithili literature, it is mentioned that the University of Calcutta has arrangement for the teaching of Maithili language. There seems no reason why the universities in the Hindi region should not have similar if not better, facilities for teaching these *bhashas*.

The question of *bhashas* has been raised because Modern Hindi cannot have any future unless the *bhashas* come into their own. Only the fullest flowering of *bhashas* as literary languages can provide Hindi with an inexhaustible reservoir of living idiom and colloquial vocabulary of every type and for every purpose. The prospectus issued for Fallon's Hindustani-English Dictionary in the seventies of the last century stated : "The wealth of

1. A history of Hindi literature by three Misra brothers—Ganesh Bihari Misra. Shyam Bihari Misra and Shukder Bihari Misra—published in 1913 A.D.

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language is in the spoken tongue ; how rich and expressive that is, those best know who are familiar with the diversified phases of every day speech of the impressionable and imaginative oriental. The living utterances of the people are almost absent from our dictionaries."[1] Referring to the rich vocabulary of *bhashas* Dr. Vasudev Saran Aggarwal states : "Innumerable gems from the vocabulary of these (bhashas) can serve to enrich the dictionary of the Hindi language. Every *bhasha* has scores of distinctive roots and affixes for forming derivatives and inflections. Every *bhasha* has its own basic stock of roots and words. There are one and half thousand such roots in the language of the area around Meerut, which constituted *Kuru Janpad* in the ancient times. These can again be useful for the Hindi language. Many of these roots could be traced to Prakrits and Apabhramśas, many more have remained preserved in those particular *Janpads* only."[1] In the various glossaries of 'Professional Terms' edited by Maulvi Zafar-ul-Rehman Dehlvi, eight volumes of which were published by the Anjuman-e-Taraqi-e-Urdu, Delhi, before the Partition of the country, there are about 25,000 words, all colloquial in the Khari Boli area, but a majority of these do not find any place in the dictionaries of Urdu and Hindi.

The problem of enriching the colloquial base of Hindi and of divesting it of its dominant artificial elements is not, in view of the above, as difficult as it is believed to be. Many of the roots for which Hindi writers at present go to Sanskrit are available in the tadbhava form in the Khari Boli and the *bhashas*, with all the richness and finer shades of meaning that the people have given them in the course of the last two or three millenniums. These roots have continually been throwing out new shoots, as they assimilated fresh nourishment from their ever-changing environments. This has furnished the colloquial languages with a large number of words from a single root and their usually large number of secondary meanings, distinct expressions for distinct modifications of the general idea, each having its appropriate place for which no other word is so well-fitted.

The *bhashas* can be equally prolific in scientific vocabulary. Fallon, referring the this, wrote more than seventy-five years ago : "The people's language is sufficiently definite, copious and expressive for all literary and scientific purposes, and the most fitting medium for the widest, most effective and speediest diffusion of knowledge and the moral and social elevation of the people."[2]

The argument sometimes put forward that Sanskritization of Hindi will bring it nearer to other languages of India because all

1. Madhukar-Janpad Andolan Ank—April-August, 1944.
2. Introduction to New Hindustani-English Dictionary by Fallon.

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these claim a common Sanskrit base, is very fallacious. The *Dakshin Bharat Hindi Prachar Sabha* in Madras has per force to teach a non-Sanskritised Hindi or Hindustani because the South Indian students insist on learning a language in which they can converse with their fellow countrymen.

Hindi can be given the vitality of a living language *firstly* by totally discarding non-colloquial tatsam and by enriching it with the immense wealth of tadbhava words which Khari Boli has come to possess. By seeking sustenance again from the inexhaustible and growing idiom of the living language and from the colloquialism of the racy, neat and pithy speech which float on the lips of men and women in the Khari Boli area, Hindi can again become natural, true and simple. Artificialness of Hindi began with change-over from tadbhava to tatsam and unless this process is completely reversed no amount of bringing closer of Urdu and Hindi and making them Hindustani or anything else, will be purposeful. *Secondly,* the sacred Saraswati rivers of the *bhashas* which are at present flowing almost unnoticed by Hindi, should be brought to the surface again and with the fertilising and purifying powers of their waters, made to bestow fecundity, magnitude and wealth on Hindi. Further it is only through such a process of gradual merging of *bhashas* into Hindi, can a common colloquial speech develop for the entire Hindi region in the course of a century or two and perhaps more.

Whether we do our mite or not, Hindi has a great future just as the immortal people of the Hindi region are destined to a great future. The makers of one of the world's greatest cultures as these people are, they have the will and the capacity to create a civilization better than any before, provided they can take their destiny into their hands. When nations start on a new life as the Indian people are sure to do now, thoughts and feelings are stimulated and new ideas acquire creativeness and vitality. Languages too then enrich themselves with particular rapidity and break out of the dead encrustment of centuries. Numberless master minds on such epochal moments spring out of the people who, with the innumerable words ready at hand, exhibit the force of nascent ideas as well as the living power of the language. One day Hindi will similarly belong to the people and acquire all their greatness. Let all those who cherish the Hindi language do their best to bring that day nearer.

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CORRIGENDA

Page 21 line 7 for 'clanse' read 'clans'
Page 22 line 14 after 'After' add 'early.'
Page 27 line 31 f. n. for 'Gtia' read 'Gita'.
Page 29 line 12 for 'Pavilian' read 'Pavilion'.
Page 33 line 15 for 'lead' read 'led'.
Page 42 line 24 for 'lead' read 'led'.
Page 61 line 1 f. n. for 'Roy' read 'Ray'.
Page 66 line 32 omit 'in the colonial world'.
Page 74 line 1 f. n. after 'Vol'. add 'I'.
Page 90 line 40 for 'renoun' read 'renown'.

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